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The deadline for the next issue of the Discussion Bulletin
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PACIFIC AREA PROJECT REPORTS

Kin, Okinawa, Project Report
1 June -- 31 Aug. '74

First off, I criticize myself for not getting off monthly reports. Yokosuka point out in a recent letter many reasons that monthly reports should be gotten out and I agree with them. Hopefully I will be more disciplined in the future around this, and with another person here, it should make it easier to do this task and others like it.

These last three months have been busy and the level of activity has remained much the same as it was in the last report. One essential difference is that GIs have taken many more responsibilities. There are more regulars coming around now and some of them have been and are developing at a considerable rate. More on this later.

Legal Work

The legal work continued with a fairly large volume of GIs coming by the center. We gave lots of advice on discharges and worked to the end with many of the cases. They included 2 humanitarians, 2 drug related, and a large number of unsuitabilities. About half of the people we helped related to the center fairly regularly. Some came around the center for advice, others would hang around and help put out the paper together, etc., and for a few, the center has been a real turning point in their lives. In particular was one GI who when he first came around the center was considering joining the American Nazi Party. He worked a lot through his racism and also did a lot of organizing in his unit around racism.

We also helped file many charges. Most of the time the charges were used as leverage, ie, the important thing wasn't that charges were followed through on with the accused facing NJP or court-martial, rather the charges were used to help obtain a speedy discharge, get courts-martial dropped down to NJP on not so serious charges being faced, or more frequently, to keep the brass from messing with GIs. A lot more should be done at projects around filing charges--it's a very effective weapon and also useful in talking about the legal system in the U.S. and real justice. It's easy to do!

Office Hours and 9th Motors

We were able to represent someone at an office hour in June. It was a victory in many ways. This GI was attached to 9th Motors at Camp Hansen. I met him out in the streets a few times and he came to the center once. One night around that time he came by the center at around 10:30 and told me about 3 charges he was facing: 2 Article 92s for Failing to Obey and Order, and one spec under Article 134. The office hour was to be the next morning and I arrived at about 7:30, enough time to meet and interview the defense witnesses. After some hassles with the brass in the hallway, and the S1 Officer (The battalion legal officer who doesn't usually know shit) verifying that I could in fact represent GIs at office hours, we got underway. When the prosecu

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tion witnesses walked into the room--all 9 of them--I was astonished because I had met and had discussions with 5 of them; a few had been coming by the Center.

The CO tried to railroad the proceedings but finally the defense witnesses got to speak after the accused and myself began firing lots of questions. The 'ceremony' continued for 1 1/2 hours and the story got more and more confused as it went on. It was becoming clear that the CO wasn't about to find him guilty. Well, he got off on all the charges and many of the prosecution witnesses were glad! Afterwards we found out that the CO had approached one prospective prosecution witness, asking him to come in and testify how the accused was a shitbird in general--which he refused to do. But it didn't end there.

Many people from 9th Motors heard about the office hours (there were 19 of them at the office hours in all), started coming around the center. We've met and talked with 30 people easily, and 4 have come to be involved regularly at the United Front--including one of the prosecution witnesses. They've also done minor actions in the company around living and working conditions. All in all, some really good struggling.

Is it "Cram It!" or "Cram It Sir!"?

One of the sets of charges filed deserves getting into details. One day in June, I was walking on Camp Hansen with a GI; we were leaving the gate to go off base. The Camp Guard on duty stopped us, saying that he got a phone call from the Camp Guard Headquarters shack. We were to wait for a SSgt who was then supposed to drive us over to the shack. When the SSgt got there we told him that there was no way we were going to go with him, that I was on base legally, and that he had better let us go. The initial guard who had stopped us was cool, and we talked with him; while the SSgt was calling up the shack and relaying our message, this Private was filling us in on the whole situation. The SSgt came back to us, and told me that he was releasing us, that I was on base illegally, and that I was never to come back on base again. Well, we got the first guard to witness all this, and log it in his book. They let us leave the base and the GI and I went down to the center and talked about getting some charges together under false official statements (Art. 107). He decided to file, so I returned to the base to find out more information about names, etc., to file the charges.

They froaked out, and the Officer of the Day (OD) from Camp Guard came out to meet me at the gate. I told this Lieutenant that this GI was filing charges on one of his men for Art. 107 and that I was there to obtain more information in order to file them. They replied by asking me questions but I failed to respond to them saying that I was there to ask them the questions. Then it all came out that it was the OD who had instructed another SSgt to call the gate and detain us. I told the OD then, that it was he whom the GI would be filing charges on and left. The GI and I drew up the charges that day; he filed them the next day with the Base Commander's office before catching the chopper to Northern Training Area (NTA) where he's stationed. We put a cover letter on the charges requesting that the Lt. be brought to Office Hours.

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A few days later this GI got a call from the Base Commander. This CO told the GI that he didn't have the right to file charges on his Lt. The GI told the CO that he could file charges on the CO for making a false official statement for stating that he couldn't file charges. Of course the CO freaked and told the GI that he was going to rip up the cover letter and charges. The GI ended the conversation by telling the CO to "Cram It!", and then hung up. The CO wasn't about to call back because this GI was working the switchboard at NTA, and the CO would have to get through him first. The GI's gunny Sgt. listened to the entire conversation and told the GI that for sure he had gone too far this time. But the GI knew what was going on. And I haven't had much trouble going on and off base lately, either.

Third Battalion, Fourth Marines

3/4 left to go on float the second week in August and replaced First Battalion. Fourth Marines (1/4). We did lots of work with GIs in two of their companies for the two months prior to their departure. Though the work wasn't nearly as successful in raising anti-imperialist consciousness as was the case with 1/4 before they left for float last April, we did have lots of good raps with GIs and got a handful of addresses to send literature to while they're out on float.

A month before they were to go they had to change barracks to make room for 1/4's return. A week after that, one of the companies was ordered to move again, but the brass made a bit of a mistake. We had good contact with this company and many of these brothers were armed with copies of Turning the Regs Around--lots of GIs were getting a good lesson of "justice." They all got together and refused to move by sitting all day in the barracks. The brass freaked but realized that there wasn't much they could do.

Particularly good about the work with 3/4 was the amount of literature gotten out and books sold to Third World GIs. We sold most of our good books to them and lots of the books from Koza also. Lots of good discussions with them before they left.

The amount of books sold this summer has been incredible. As usual the best seller was TTRA--we ran out of them frequently--and are out now! When will the next edition be ready? The next best sellers continued to be books about the Third World. If we had had more, they would have been sold out also by now. Hopefully we will avoid running out in the future since we recently have placed a large book order.

1/4 Is Back in Town

We haven't had as good contact with 1/4 since they've come back as before they left for float. Three of the key people are no longer with the unit so that's been one of the problems. They got back on 12 Aug. and a dozen or so GIs from this battalion have been by. More will probably be coming by soon for legal help, and also we asked certain GIs to pass on messages to people who used to come around so a few of them should be by also.

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Their float was pretty routine. They made stops at all of the usual Asian ports and lots of GIs went UA (AWOL) in the Philippines. One interesting note is about Shore Party. Shore Party is the unit that is in charge of setting up operations and moving troops and supplies. A group of them went to Tinian Island in Micronesia where the U.S. is going to be setting up military bases. Most of them were heavy equipment operators. Well, they were placed at the disposal of some of the people of Tinian for a few days--sort of a "good-will mission for imperialism. When these Shore Party members started the assignment they didn't know what was coming off. While it was still going on, a few of them caught on to what was happening and by the time it was over, everyone (low-ranking EMs) knew what was going on. One brother who is Apache caught on and did a lot of talking with other GIs. They finally realized that their mission was to pacify and buy off the Tinian people and prepare them for an avalanche of future military construction. Some of the Shore Party members and others from small units who assisted were really pissed off by the role they were forced to play.

Coast Guard

There's a Coast Guard station here on Okinawa that we made contact with early in the summer. The name of the station is Gesashi and there are around 40 GIs stationed there. While their living conditions are nothing to complain about, they work long hours including many watches on weekends; and they are also under the command of a 24 year old officer who is pretty much of a pig. They've been down to the center in Kin and Koza fairly often on weekends and we've had lots of good talks and legal actions. A few of them have taken to reading some great books and are rapping to other people at the station about them. They've had good discussions around racism and sexism. The station is very isolated--it takes about 1 1/2 hours to get to Kin--and there's not much to do in Gesashi. They're right on the ocean (after all, they are the Coast Guard--so what if the American coast extends 8000 miles west of Calif.), and the site itself is very small. They are one of the most isolated military spots on the island. We've been up there four times--including one time where they had a great party for the entire station.

They have also helped distribute the Omega Press a few times, as they are not banned by regulation from doing so. They've also helped some in the production of the OP.

Legal actions with them have included many Article 138's, letters to congress (for what it's worth), and advice about Office Hours (Article 15). They have a special type of hearing called "Administrative hearings" which can't be refused, nor is there any appeal procedure to have the sentence reduced or set aside. We've been trying to find ways to fight this hearing but it will take a lot since it is a Coast Guard Reg. Another problem with the Coast Guard is they come under the Department of Transportation and not Defense. But they follow some DOD provisions!

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They also want to do something about bair, such as what has been going on in Germany, and are prepared to get busted in order to challenge regs.

Smash Sexism

Strong struggles have come down over the summer around sexism. Some have been largely successful and others moved people a little. Being here for the last 8 months in Kin, and being the only civilian, has convinced me more than ever of the importance of dealing with sexism and relating to it in people's lives. Men must especially deal with other men's sexism, and this in turn helps us male organizers to further deal with our own sexism. We are in a good situation to develop relationships with male GIs (cadre) and part of a good strong relationship includes struggling with our sexism. All too often, I fear, women are dealing with male GIs while men organizers join in on the conversation, rather than initiating it.

Omega Press

Most of the responsibility for getting the May, June and July issues of the Omega Press out has been with Kin; this has been good in some ways and bad in others. A few more GIs than usually do took responsibility to write articles, edit, type, and layout--though not as much as could have been done.

There was lots of talk this summer of getting out a paper that would be for Can Hansen and Schwab--both Marine bases. While that still is out of the question because of staffing shortages, hopefully we'll be able to do something in that area in the coming months. Everyone seems to agree here that this would create a lot more activity around the paper and draw out GIs from these bases. In the meantime we're going to have regular meetings for the paper and try to get GIs at the center to take more responsibilities.

Distribution has gone fairly well throughout the summer. The civilian staff has been rather transitory all summer on Okinawa because of personnel changes, but even so I was left alone to distribute papers on payday, only once. Even that night we got rid of lots of papers. Civilians in Koza averaged coming up to Kin 2 nights a week in June, almost no nights a week in July, and about 2 nights a week in August. So the damper has been that we haven't been able to get out as much on other days to distribute. But that will change when the other civilian gets here also.

The OP has continued to pay for itself through contributions. Also the quality of the new style (smaller paper run on a mimeograph) has continually increased.

Violence--Reactionary, not Revolutionary

It certainly has been an eventful summer. There's been a 2 week cycle of violence (reactionary, of course), as follows:

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On the June 15th payday I got into a 20 minute discussion with a Latino SSgt, and during the course of it we got into a discussion about religion (terrible mistake) and also his platoon commander happened to meander by. The discussion hadn't been too bad until this CO came by, then the SSgt got piggy. Well, in the middle of the conversation the SSgt up and gave me a right fist to my left eye which hurt considerably. But the situation stayed cool--lots of marines gathered around to offer support but luckily nothing happened, as it probably would have turned into a drunken brawl.

And two weeks later...a drunk passing by the center was recognized by a person who was in, talking with us and helping us put OPs together. He called out to the drunk, who came in seething, thinking that he (the drunk) had been called names. We cooled him down, then he asked a woman at the center to go to bed with him in that many words. So we tried to talk about that to no avail. He wanted to fight. His "friend" who called out to him told him to calm him down and started rapping about the United Front. This all lasted for about 10 minutes, whereupon the GI helping out accepted the drunk's offer to fight. They went down the street and around the corner. The drunk took one swing which was blocked, and fell down to the ground; then he begged to be beaten and kicked, saying that he was no good, etc. Aah, the Marine Corps is such a great institution! The guy told him to take it easy, and again told the drunk that he had the wrong impression about the United Front; then he left him. He came back to the center for a few minutes and described what had happened. Unfortunately he hasn't been back since. He was from the Bronx and had some good attitudes.

And two weeks later...four marines were walking by the UF, one recognized me, and came into talk for a minute and pick up some literature. A second GI, one of the group, came in and told his friend to "get out of this commie place." A third then kicked over the literature table outside on the sidewalk and sent OPs flying. We went outside to cool this guy down and pick up the scattered papers, and all of a sudden, SHATTER. This 3rd guy kicked in two plate glass windows with his boot, sending splintered glass all over the United Front--luckily no one was inside. The first GI gave us his name while the other 3 fled. One more bottle came smashing through the side door while we were getting the information but no one got hit. Then the first GI left after giving his name, etc., and when he went up the block, his other 3 companions could be seen waving broken bottles around in the air as if they might come back. They didn't. The bill came to \$5000 but unfortunately, while we had the correct battalion and company of the GI, he had given us a fake name. And one out of 10,000 faces at Camp Hansen is hard to find. We've gotten some information (and are getting more) that shows that most of the people involved were MPs. We had met and made friends with many MPs and Camp Guard over the summer and had never yet run into the pigs we met that night.

And two weeks later ... (this brings us to mid-August). Luckily for me, I was not at the center, having left a few hours earlier. Two GIs were working the center when all of a sudden, a formation of 9 marines marched down the street and hung a

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right into the center. They were actually marching. They stayed for 10 minutes asking questions about "where the long haired hippy" was and how the next time they saw me or any of the GIs who came around the center, "they were going to beat the shit out of us. They took a couple of papers out in front of the center and set fire to them. When they left, they took a handful of papers and threw them around outside. Just think what their energy could do if it were channeled into good revolutionary consciousness. Communism certainly has a bad name around these parts!

Also there have been many threats--mostly idle, we think--while out in the streets distributing. Any canisters of mace, helmets, clubs, etc., for defense can be sent to the P.O. Box...and will be gratefully accepted!

Being Mostly Alone

Being the only full-time person in Kin for the last 8 months has been bad politically and personally. Lately it has been very hard to take a personal interest in people's problems, both the legal problems that drop-ins have, and the personal/political problems and discussions that regulars and cadre have. August in particular has been the worst month. While the work has gone on fairly well, considering the circumstances, I have been lax about a number of things. At the same time, it has been a relaxing month for me--something that I really needed, but not a good way to go about relaxing. I have fallen somewhat into a syndrome of putting off things because I am the only one here, but trust I will change that when the other civilian arrives. While putting much of the responsibility on this set-up, I also accept that I have developed some bad attitudes about it.

Also demoralizing this past summer is the exodus of nearly 20 people that I have grown close to in different ways. Most of the civilians that were here have gone, some Japanese friends also, and GIs that I was close to. It's very sad to see these people leave when you've built up strong relationships. Especially when you're in an environment where there's an absence of a broad community of friends and comrades.

Third World

Contact with Third World GIs over the summer has remained much the same as the last report. We continue to get out lots of literature and certain brothers drop by the center about once a month to check out new books and get into raps. Puerto Ricans continue to be strong and their relationships cross battalions and encompass the whole island--particularly Camps Hansen and Schwab.

Dapping has really decreased and it's hard to tell the reasons why. One theory is that a black nationalist group on base was bummering out lots of brothers and there were lots of feuds developing, so many blacks refused to dap constantly because of it.

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Racial tension hasn't come to much of a head yet this summer, as we first expected. The exception to this was an action on the part of Okinawan men. We had a typhoon over the 4th of July weekend and the storm weekend on the night of the 4th. Lots of Okinawans prior to that night had been gathering in the streets when bars were closing and there had been a few instances of Okinawans beating GIs. Well, that night many Okinawans marched up to the main gate of Camp Hansen and threw bottles and cans at the base. The Japanese Police left it alone and there was nothing much that the military could do. MPs also no longer have jurisdiction off base as of last May. (This may be changing soon).

Becoming an Alcoholic

Not really, but after the center's closing, around 10:30, I've tried to get out in the bar streets a couple of times a week and talk with people. I also get to some of the bars that people coming around the UF sometimes go to. It's really been a good thing to do. There have been lots of good political discussions and oftentimes people spoke out more freely than they might have had they been at the center.

Another good thing that's come out of this is that I've been able to develop a good relationship with an Okinawan man who calls himself an anarchist. We've stayed up late in the night talking politics more than once. He usually donates to the OP when we're out in the street. He understands clearly the struggles of non-white GIs and has read some Malcolm X. He hasn't been actively political for awhile and is married; they have three children. I dropped off some posters at his house about a rally in support of Koreans, being held in Naha in late August. He decided to go to the rally, which was great, he hadn't done that for awhile. We've some fair discussions about families and women's liberation.

So, all in all, a good summer. And september is already off to a good start!

FREE THE MIDWAY & IWAKUNI BROTHERS!
CHIBARIYO! (KEEP ON STRUGGLING!)

Koza, Okinawa, Project Report August & July

July and August were slow months here. So this report is short and not very encouraging. The first week of September, however, has been very encouraging, and with the new center, there is every reason to be optimistic about the future.

Over the summer all but one of the strong people with whom we had good relationships over the winter and spring returned to the states, and a new generation is just now beginning to take their places.

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But the Omega Press is received as well as (or better than) ever in Koza and Futema and there were a few GIs who came by over the summer, to write articles and help with layout. Also we have recently been meeting more people from the army who have come by for counselling and for consciously political reasons also. On the street, passing out the paper, it is clear that a change in conditions or an improvement in morale of the servicepeople in this area does not account for the slow activity at PH--oppressive conditions continue to exist in the marines, things have possibly worsened in the army, and the military "justice" system continues to rake in victims. We have done self-criticism about our work and feel that perhaps the problem is in a sense more quantitative than qualitative--not enough energy in developing contacts, not enough leafletting, and especially not enough self-discipline on our part. The new center will undoubtedly increase our number of contacts (it's begun to already) and will make it much easier to leaflet (the bar street will be just down the street instead of a 10-15 minute bus ride away). Of course, it will not be a panacea, but it will definitely improve the situation.

New Center: The New People's House (we've decided to keep the old name) is a 2 room storefront with a kitchen and bathroom (no more people's benjo!) about 30 yard off BC street--an idea location. It is brand new, in excellent condition, and while the rent is high (¥40,000), it is not bad considering the high value of commercial property in the area. (The old place's rent was going up in Oct. to ¥40,000 also. So the difference will be the cost of an apartment for 2 staff people to live in--¥15,000, we are hoping.) After long talks with the landlord we anticipate no problem there. Having a non-live-in center should alleviate some of the problems we've felt in the past: the lack of privacy for the civilians, and the feeling of intrusion on someone else's living space that some GIs expressed. When the two new civilian folks get here, we will be pretty much moved in.

Study Group: We've had no formal study group since June.

Transitory Civilians

July and August were screwed up because of the number of civilians coming and going. During almost 4 weeks in July and August there was only one person here (an one in Kin), and few regular GIs, so it was impossible to have someone at PH while someone else was out leafletting. We were able to do some counselling (CO applications, office hours, 138s and filing charges) and managed to meet two right-on army couples, who've become pretty close to us, especially this first GI and his wife.

Originally this GI came to us for some legal help in dealing with the military pigs and some help in filing for chapter 13 status in civilian court in order to fend off civilian creditors. His debts to creditors were not being paid because the army was screwing with his pay. The his CO started getting letters of indebtedness from his creditors and barred him from re-enlistment. The GI had been planning to re-enlist and get the bonus that went with it for several years--it was on that basis that

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he'd allowed himself to get into debt in the first place. The bonus would have gotten him out of debt altogether. The CO knew all this but barred him from re-enlistment anyway. We advised him in the preparation of several 138 complaints and sets of charges as well as representing him in some negotiations with creditors (it's also possible that he's being ripped off by a credit & loan company in Kansas). Furthermore, his wife was being hassled by both the American and Japanese authorities for working in a club in Naha without permission of the GI's CO. At the time many American women were working in that club and others, with command permission. There appears to be no reason other than spite and malice that the GI's CO denied her permission to work. With her not being able to work, their chances of getting out of debt grew even slimmer. Anyway, as a result of his many 138's and set of charges, and her having a person meeting with General David, Commander of US ARBCO (in which she accused the army of ruining her life and threatened the general with a congressional investigation of things didn't improve for her and her family), they are now being transferred to Ft. Hood, Washington, almost a year ahead of time. She has gotten involved in WH (Women's House), coming to meetings and contributing articles for the second issue of Women's Voices. We've also gotten to know their two children. Their problems are typical of an important group of people (married second termers, who've re-upped purely for financial reasons but really can't stand the military) that up until this time we have not reached.

We've also made contact with another army couple. They are politically very advanced--he was fired for organizing in the phone company in the Bay Area before he enlisted. But he views the army as a way to get over for a few years, and is not too interested in heavy organizing--although his refusal to not express his opinions when he wishes to lost him his security clearance and got him transferred out of the communications center where he worked. In this sense, he seems to be typical of many blacks in the army--they came in because they figured there wouldn't be a war for another few years, they had nothing going for them back home, and the army was a steady income at least. She is as political as he is. Both of them are very interested in the Okinawan struggle and hopefully more will come of that interest in the future.

We've also gotten close to two other army people, a white GI and a black WAC, who've come by for counseling and who we will probably represent at courts-martial. Why army people are coming by at this time and not ever before this year is a mystery. A possible explanation, however, is that army over here is undergoing a major transition as the number of people is reduced from 8,000 presently to 3,000 by next year. From what we gather this has caused a great deal of administrative tangles within the army which in turn has increased the amount of tension and harassment--hence, more interest in PH.

Our Marine contacts have expanded in WERS-17, a particularly harassed unit at Futema. Many 138's have been filed against the OIC, a super pig warrant officer

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who was a captain 15 years ago, busted down to staff sgt, and since managed to worm his way back up the ranks to his present position. Not only does he harass the members of the unit all the time, but some guys who were stationed under him at New River MCAS (H) have evidence that he stole over \$15,000 worth of equipment from the Marine Corps. One guy saw the Group CO about it, but he was insulted, called a pit and a liar, and threatened with a BCD in response! Later on that guy was charged with disobeying an order to get a haircut--an order that was never given. So he'll probably refuse office hours and if he gets a court, one of our folks will probably represent him.

Coast Guard people from the coast guard station in the northern part of Okinawa have been relating to both PH and the United Front for a couple of months. We originally met a couple of them on BC street and gave them an OP and sold them a TTRA. After that, more started coming around. Their base is closer to Kin (it's about 2 hours away), but they spend a lot of their weekend liberty time in Koza, so the contact has been spready pretty well between the two projects. In the Kin project report, there's talk about the activities they've been pulling off on base and the kind of counselling we've been helping them with. I'd like to add that we're thinking of going up there soon and showing some movies in the barracks, if the guys can get together, and also that the movement has been spreading to the other CG stations in the Pacific--Yap, Hawaii, Iwojima. We mail them OPs and TTRAs.

The function of these stations is to operate LORAN transmitters--These installations broadcast a signal on a certain frequency that is used for navigation. (A ship picks up two of the signals from two different places, and can thereby determine its own position. Its military significance comes from its use in submarine (nuclear armed, that is) navigation, for which it is essential. In the event of a nuclear war this little station would be extremely important. In fact, there's a contingency plan in case Okinawa is attacked, some Marines from Schwab and Hansen go to the LORAN station to provide protection.

Relations with Okinawans: These have remained good to excellent. A new man at Zengunro, the base workers union, has been introduced to us, who is a lot more radical than our previous contact and more cooperative also, so we anticipate improve relations around demonstrations, literature, etc. In late July we participated in a demonstration for a political prisoner, Matsunaga-san, a Japanese textile craftsman accused of murdering a policeman during the Koza riot of 1970. Matsunaga, at that time a person sympathetic to radical movement but not an activist himself, actually tried to rescue a burning policeman from a car that had been molotoved by a sect group. A newspaper took a photo of him holding the policeman and claimed he was beating him. On that basis he is being charged with murder, since the cop died a few hours later. The case has been a major issue on Okinawa since the incident occurred. Judgment (the verdict) is scheduled to be announced in early October. His defense committee consists of young students and workers who are some of the most radical people we've met here, who aren't all hung up in sects and inter-sect hassling (although several members of the defense committee are in the various sec

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We have recently been doing a lot of propaganda about Iejima Island, a small island off the Okinawan coast, where there is an air force bombing practice range. Late in July an Iejiman was shot with a flare gun by an airman, for no apparent reason. He was on the range collecting grass, but Iejimans have been doing this every day (after 5:00 when the range shuts down for the day) for years. As usual when a GI rips off an Okinawan, there was a tremendous outcry among the Okinawan people, demanding that he be tried in an Okinawan court. And, as usual, most GI's, black and white, feel he should be tried at a court-martial. The Air Force also wants him to be tried by the military (surprise) and after a lot of hassling, a few demonstrations and a personal meeting between Gov. Yara and General David, the Okinawans succeeded in getting the case moved up the joint committee of Japan and US which rules on these and other SOFA related matters.

The main point we have been trying to make in our discussions and literature is that the important thing is not so much what happens in this case, but that the range be turned back to the people. We are circulating a petition to Cong. Aspin to this effect. Circulating this petition has provided a good way to talk with Air Force people. They are very brainwashed and pacified and harder to talk with than Army, Marines, or Navy people, but we are going to keep at it.

Article 15 Petitions: We turned in about 510 Article 15 petitions to Cong. Don Edwards of Cal. last month. We did not realize that San Diego was still pushing the campaign and turning them in to Dellums; otherwise we would have also. But we thought that Dellums had probably gone about as far as he was going to on the issue, and that a new person might make some more mileage out of it. Edwards is from San Jose, took a right on stand during the judiciary committee impeachment hearings, and is chairman of the subcommittee on civil and constitutional rights. Since the basic claim of the petition is that Article 15 is unconstitutional, we asked him to convene hearings on it in his subcommittee.

Okinawa pamphlet: We are working full steam on the pamphlet and it should be done by 9/15. It's a total drag that we weren't able to get it completed when the old people were here, and it's one of the major examples of the poor self-discipline that I mentioned before and which has been the main drawback of the work here.

However, with the pamphlet out of the way, and the new center, we think great things will probably happen in the coming year.

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Iwakuni Report
mid-Aug. -- mid. Sept.

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(a note: we will send this report now, and try to do a short one for the next 2-week period, then go back to monthly reports done near the beginning of each month, to be better in tune with GIPA's time schedule.)

A political trial which ended in a short-term victory. Initial contact with people in the new Harrier squadron shows some want to do something about only Snuffies working on Saturday; Staffs exploit their rank more when overseas. Press conference for the Iwakuni 5, and witnesses at trial shows international solidarity behind Korean patriots and Iwakuni 5. Old people leave, new people come, bringing fresh ideas, and a good start on another year of struggle.

SEMPER FI

The two SF's in this period were very different in terms of participation and preparation. The first, No. 15, came out just after the 15 (Iwakuni 5) trials began, so we wanted to tell people what had happened so far, and encourage people to go to the trials. The articles on pgs 10 and 11 were written by people involved here, and the 15 article was a joint effort. The article about the VVAW/WSO demonstration in DC came from a Marine who was active here last fall with VMA 533. He is now working with other active duty people on a paper that just started at Cherry Point, N.C. He also sent us the support letter for the 15. The Midway articles came from the Freedom of the Press and press releases from Yokosuka. People have asked us a lot about the Midway trials, and reacted favorably to seeing more about it in this paper. People are very high to how the military is trying to make the Midway look like a floating vacation ship in the Stars and Lies. Even several lifers have talked to us on the street about how bad conditions on the Midway are.

The next issue, No. 16, was put together with too little preparation and GI participation. This was our fault for putting it off, and especially pointed out the necessity for having on-going, structured organization to plan and make the paper and other activities. We see clearly that we need organization to get the work of the paper done more efficiently, be able to stick with each other at times of crunch, be able to criticize each other in a non-alienating way, to gain experience for future organizing we will be involved in, and--the most important--to gain practical political power here at Iwakuni. We will move to correct this weakness.

On the back page of this issue we started to push for such an organization. We got a fairly good response, and had a good meeting on 9/18, but more about that in the next report. One guy wrote his first article, about constitutional rights, and it certainly won't be his last, as he's started to get very active.

One of the obvious drawbacks of our lack of organization and bad planning for the Sept. 12 issue was that we got out on the streets with it late the first night--pay-day night--and thus missed a lot of money and people.

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But a threat, either started or passed on by the SJA, proved to be an empty one. He told a JAG lawyer we worked with, with the obvious intention that the word would get back to us, that one of us would be arrested by the Japanese cops the next time he collected money for the paper on the streets. We checked with the Hobbit people; and they said all that might happen is that they could make it hard for us to extend our visas next time. But there were no arrests. The Japanese pigs haven't even checked IDs of any of us since last November.

RADIO FREE IWAKUNI

We continued broadcasting, with two broadcasts we participated in during this month. The people from the Hobbit also did one broadcast on their own. The first one we participated in was a great success. Cadre people who lived in the barracks knew we were coming and encouraged people to come out of the barracks and listen. After a planned little speech, we asked if people knew what the 15 trials were all about. People yelled "no;" they wanted to hear more about it, through the fence so we talked more about the trials and Korea. Outward support from cadre on the inside of the fence, like with shouts of approval and power signs, was catchy among other people on base and made the broadcast a real success. Also, we hadn't planned to do this broadcast far in advance, so the pigs didn't know about it and weren't there until too late to hassle people back into their barracks. By the time the MPs came in force, there were 50 or so GIs on the base in front of their barracks listening to us; and they couldn't handle that many people.

At the end of the broadcast, we announced that we'd be back the next day with more. So the MPs came in force before the time we usually started; and got everyone inside the barracks. Too bad for the pigs, because we decided not to show up that day.

The second broadcasting session during this period was pretty much a failure. First, we didn't make a tape ahead of time, so we lost the up of making the tape as a group. Second, we didn't alert people we knew living in the barracks near the broadcasting site, so they weren't there to lend support from inside. As a result, a couple of pigs inside the barracks were able to disrupt the broadcast by yelling at us and playing their stereo loud back at us. A lesson learned: the military must be destroyed from within...we have to coordinate efforts or continually end up competing for loudness with Johnny Cash.

HOBBIT

The Hobbit folks continue their struggle with various activities: discussion and lecture meetings about the government's proposed new criminal law; a women's group that meets at least weekly (for the first time there is a woman now living at the Hobbit); a study group about Korea; and support work for the 15; without which that struggle would have been much weaker (more about that in the 15 section).

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IWAKUNI FIVE

There is no use going into the details of the trials or the results. Those are all included in the Semper Fi's of August 1 and August 30, in the leaflets "Free the Iwakuni Five" and "Victory for the Iwakuni Five" and in the Legal Report to follow.

The military judge proved very quickly that we'd misjudged him by expecting that he might accept some of our arguments about the order. The word we had was that he planned to make a career as a military judge, and thus would be careful to make decisions that wouldn't be reversed on appeal. Whether or not we'll win on appeal remains to be seen, but the judge was not careful around the many issues that might lead to a reversal. He only covered ass once, at the end of the trial, bullshitting to one defendant that his political beliefs had no effect on his sentence. The judge's actions convinced us he'd decided that it would be better for his career as a military judge not to cross his commander, the CG of this base who issued the anti-distribution order we were challenging, rather than be concerned with a reversal on a constitutional issue.

So this attempt to challenge the order failed. And we are left with the conclusion that they will prosecute people under this order for showing politically controversial letters to other GIs. Yet we feel we had a partial success in terms of trial results: 3 people completely freed; one getting a BCD that had been suspended in January; and one getting 2 months in the brig, 2 months at \$200 fine, and a bust to E-1 from E-3. This was not stiff enough punishment to scare people away from us, as the military had hoped. In fact, it pissed off many people who feel that last sentence was unjustly harsh.

And we were successful in using the trials to educate people about Korea. But this process is just beginning, as we plan to do a special "Fall In at Ease" issue about the I5 and Korea. We will be able to make transcripts of the testimony about Korea, one of the defendant's testimony, and of the defense's closing argument. People who want copies of this pamphlet should contact us with requests for how many and \$ for postage.

We did three press releases, aside from the ones in the Aug. 1 Semper Fi, mostly for the press. We had hoped to attract some of the American press in Tokyo, thinking that their presence at the trials would have more effect on the court than Japanese press. Together with the Hobbit, we translated these and the two leaflets, "Free the Iwakuni Five" and "Victory for the I5."

A good press conference was held Aug. 27 at the Hobbit. One of us spoke about the development of the anti-order movement into a pro-Korean people's movement, the situation of the trials, and our political position on the trials: the parallel repression by Pak and US military, opportunity they gave us to widen the anti-Pak movement with these trials, connection between Pak and US military, opportunity to strike

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down order. Another person read one of the defendant's statements in "Free the I5." One Hobbit person read the Hobbit's statement of support for the I5--to appear in the 9/30 Fi. Then the Japanese lawyer who shared in the defense but was only allowed to consult with the American lawyer in court, explained that he had been forbidden from participating actively in court, explained our arguments against the order and the relevance of a Japanese court decision which said Americans in Japan have the right to engage in political activity against American foreign policy, appealing to other Americans, and appealing to the Japanese government about issues directly affecting them. A past leader of Beheiren and New Left philosopher/strategist spoke as a representative of the International Committee to Save Kim Chi Ha, the group responsible for the two Japanese and one American witness about Korea and US military involvement at one of the trials. He stressed the importance of the stand of the I5 from within the military in this time when Pak's rule is in question from many fronts. He also pointed out the importance of people in the military questioning the policies of their "superiors," seeing this as an important parallel to the struggle for democracy within South Korea. One of us then talked about the reaction and support from other GIs and VVAW/WSO, reading letters from 2 GIs in the States and telling about VVAW/WSO's petition campaign for the I5. Another Hobbit person concluded with announcements of trial dates, Japanese and Americans testifying about Korea, and the Hobbit's nation-wide petition campaign for the I5.

The coverage in movement press--American and Japanese--has been good. VVAW/WSO's support has been particularly helpful in showing people how we are tied to a national (international) organization and not fighting these pigs alone. The best straight press coverage was in the Japanese Mainichi Shimbun, in an article which resulted from an interview. Unfortunately, this didn't get translated for the English version of that paper. We probably would have gotten better coverage if we could have had someone in the court room explaining to the Japanese reporters what was going on. Since the reporters didn't understand that much English, and our only Japanese-speaking American was banned from the base, we couldn't provide that. But the Hobbit people did the best they could to keep people informed.

The Hobbit people also got other movement people to come observe the trial the day of the testimony about Korea and the US military. People came from Fukuoka, Tokyo, Kobe, and Hiroshima to pretty much fill the court room. After that day's trial they also had a press conference about their testimony, and later a meeting at the Hobbit with a member of the International Committee to Save Kim Chi Ha, who was the main person responsible for getting the other people to testify, and two other people. One of them talked about her two day trip to Korea in August as a representative of the International Committee: they were harassed and followed by KCIA from the time they got to Haneda airport to leave Tokyo; the Korean authorities treated the Americans in the group, especially one for whom a telegram had been sent by Sen. Kennedy to the American Embassy, with much concern and respect; the Korean Foreign minister talked only of Pak, while one of their Korean friends spoke only of the people.

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One of the people at the meeting spoke of the end of Beheiren, an up-coming joint anti-Pak action in Tokyo (amazingly to include the JCP, JSP, labor unions, their International Committee, etc.!), and the importance of seeing the struggle here as part of a bigger one, i.e., not just for GI rights. The military critic who testified at one of the trials spoke of the importance of coordinating efforts from outside and inside the base to watch the movement of the military. He talked about the shift in US strategy to the extensive dependence on the Marine Corp's "quick lift" capacity (thus the importance of Iwakuni, the Harrier), and the increasing importance of the Marine Corps in US military strategy.

Most of the Five, and a few supporting Marines, asked for permission under the order we've been fighting to pass out a leaflet about the I5 and a copy of the letter to Fulbright. One person got permission, then found that they'd given him permission to pass them out around a supply building where not very many people went--not where he'd asked for permission. He pursued the issue and got permission to pass them out in a barracks area. He got generally good response, and 20 people gave him back signed letters to send to Fulbright. The defendant who ended up with the BCD got permission for the same leaflet, but not if it conflicted with his military duties. The day after he was given permission he was put on duty driver for the period he had permission to pass out the leaflet. They have not been giving any permission to pass out stuff off-base anymore, presumably to back up their claim that they are using the order to protect the Status of Forces Agreement which says GIs won't engage in political activity in Japan.

Until now people have been asking permission to pass out different kinds of literature--some with the expectation of getting it OK'd (and some getting it), and some to provide ammunition for the court case in DC. We have changed our strategy so that people will no longer be applying for prior command approval for the purposes of the law suit. We have enough plaintiffs for the suit, and don't need to continue to make it easy for the pigs to pick out active people.

LEGAL REPORT

(1) Word has sifted down to us through the Legal Office that the 60-day order, stopping people on Wing tours (doesn't apply to people with Station or the Navy) from having their dependents with them for more than 60 days, was declared unconstitutional in DC district court. We haven't seen anything in writing yet. We were able to find new plaintiffs for this suit a couple months ago after a request from the people filing it in DC came for new plaintiffs. Word has also come to us through a "leak" in the Legal Office that the command plans to harass people who keep their wives and children here longer than 60 days by sending them to the Philippines, Okinawa, etc. It's hard to say if they really believe not having their wives here makes people more "combat ready," if they are getting their cut from the bar/prostitute racket, or if they are just pissed off about the "civilian sector" telling them how to run their military.

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(2) A hearing to vacate suspension of one of the 15's BCD ("awarded" at a court-martial in January for 364 days UA) was held the nights of Aug. 28, 29. Maj. Costello, the hearing officer, forced the hearing to start the night of the 28th even though the defense lawyer wasn't available; and to continue the next night with the lawyer, knowing the lawyer had been in court that whole day and the day before. An MP Sgt. Bowden testified that he saw the defendant passing out the letter to Fulbright, but later couldn't explain why he hadn't included this in the incident report filed the night of the incident. He also stated that he took the letter being presented as evidence; one of us could have testified that this was a lie, but wasn't allowed on base for any reason. Costello found him not guilty of violating the order, but recommended the vacation (or, more properly, "final dismissal") anyway for "attempting to violate the order"--something he wasn't charged with. We expect this discharge will be upgraded if we win our suit against the order in DC.

(3) One of the 15 trials started Aug. 28 with pre-trial motions, continued the 29th and 30th with pre-trial and the merits, and finished Sept. 4 with E&M. The judge denied motion to dismiss on grounds of public trial denial: two people had been denied access to base to observe trials. Also denied motion to allow those two people to testify on the distribution they did on base on Open Day in April, hoping to show that all they did was distribute--an activity allowed on an open base, and arguably on an Open Day, according to Flower decision. After half a day of the MPs at the gate stopping Japanese people from entering the base to observe, with or without escorts, the judge found that the Japanese people had been improperly excluded and instructed PMO to start allowing them on--if they had ID cards (many Japanese people don't carry them) and escorts. The judge ruled the military doesn't have to provide escorts. After first insisting that a Japanese movement lawyer from Kyoto who participated in a past court-martial at Iwakuni in late '70, early '71 (and was stopped from representing one Marine here since then), could be in the court as an observer, and the defense could take recesses to consult with him, the judge finally agreed to let Ono-san sit at the defense table. But he was not allowed to do any questioning or arguing.

The military judge then denied a motion to call the CG, who issued the order being challenged, to the stand. Another motion for dismissal, on the grounds that the convening authority, NA Smith, the defendant's CO, had a personal interest in bringing charges against the defendant, was denied. In an interview with the military defense attorney, the CO said the defendant was affiliated with a Commie front organization. If this had been granted, it would have only caused a delay as the CG, the next superior officer, would then be able to re-refer the charges.

The government's testimony established that the defendant showed a copy of the letter to Fulbright to other people, that he didn't distribute or pass it out, and that no one signed it while the MPs were watching. We moved for dismissal because "circulation," which he was charged with, was not included in the order. The judge

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accepted the government's "argument" that circulation is the same as distribution. A motion for a not-guilty finding because there was no proof of distribution was also denied.

We then proved selective enforcement. An MP admitted that on numerous occasions he'd observed people passing out religious material off-base, but had done nothing about it. The Chief of Staff, 1st MAW, testified that the Jesus freaks only have permission to pass out their literature on base. And a Marine stationed here plead the Fifth Amendment (Art. 31) when asked if he'd distributed religious material off-base. The CG refused to grant him immunity so he could testify, so a motion for mis-trial was made, claiming the government was stopping evidence from coming before the court--also denied. A Japanese person from near Hiroshima then testified that he had religious literature distributed to him at Teen Challenge, a Jesus freak establishment off base, by Marines who run the place. He identified one booklet as one that he'd received there, which had a picture of the A-Bomb dome in Hiroshima. The caption under the picture essentially said that the reason people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki had the A-Bomb dropped on them was because Japan had rejected Christ. (We weren't aware that he'd ever been this far away from home.) The judge wouldn't accept this exhibit as evidence.

The illegality and unconstitutionality of the order was then argued for about an hour. With no questions, and after a full minute and a half to consider, the judge found the defendant guilty of 2 counts of violating the anti-distribution order. He started with 3 charges of UA, one breach of the peace (where did they find peace in Iwakuni's GI bar district?), and 2 Art. 92's. He plead guilty to one of the UA's (56 minutes). After the government's testimony was presented, the judge accepted a motion for a finding of not guilty on 1 UA and the breach of peace. So he was later found not guilty on the remaining charge of UA.

There are many grounds for reversal on appeal, including the illegality and unconstitutionality of the order, denial of the Japanese lawyer as a defense attorney, selective enforcement, "circulation" not being in the order, denial of public trial, and improper referral.

During the E&M phase of the case, we put on 2 witnesses who testified about conditions in S. Korea and one witness who testified as a military critic as to the role of Iwakuni MCAS in sustaining Pak's regime. The judge was extremely reluctant to allow any of this testimony and only did so to a limited extent after lengthy argument. Both he and the prosecutor expressed interest as "military men" in what the critic might have to say, but denied that it had any relevance. The defendant took the stand and clearly expressed his reasons and motivation for showing the letter to other Marines. Where there was nothing the judge could do to restrict him, he obviously did not listen and appeared to be writing his sentencing speech while he was testifying. Thereafter he delivered that speech, saying that he was not punishing the defendant for his political views, "even though he might not agree with them," but simply because as a marine the defendant's only duty was to obey orders--

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after which he imposed sentence of 60 days confinement in the brig, forfeiture of \$200 per month for two months and a bust to E-1, with a recommendation that confinement be suspended. His CO refused to suspend confinement and he is now serving his sentence. The lawyer is going to file an Art. 69 appeal on his behalf as soon as possible.

An interesting aspect of his confinement is the mail and visiting restrictions apparently being enforced in the Iwakuni brig. He has been told that he may write to and receive mail only from his family, persons above the rank of E-5, one woman whom he may designate as his wife or "girl friend," and his lawyers. Also it appears these are the only people who may visit him. We are considering a challenge to these arbitrary restrictions.

4. The day after that trial ended, another 15 trial began. In this case we asked for a military jury and selected what appeared to be a favorable, or at least fair, jury. However, before any evidence was introduced, we saw the government had a serious defect in its case, apart from the illegality of this order, in that there was no witness available who could testify that he saw the defendant showing a copy of the letter. They tried to put on an MP who saw him, from across the street, with something in his hand which he couldn't identify but thought was a copy of the letter. Not even Judge Lorenz could permit this testimony. At this point, realizing that their case was hopeless, the prosecution rested without even putting on any evidence he failed to obtain prior command refusal--a point which was critical under the order. Therefore the judge had to grant, reluctantly, a motion for a finding of not guilty.

5. After seeing the result in that trial and realizing that the same results were certain in the next case, the prosecution, always mindful of their won-lost record, decided to dismiss all charges against the defendant. They had already decided to dismiss charges against another of the 15 for substantially the same reason, i.e., they didn't have a case. Naturally, this should have been, and probably was, obvious to them right from the beginning, however, they made a decision to punish them by such measures as pre-trial restriction, etc., as long as possible.

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PROJECT REPORTS

Ft. Bragg GI Union

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Folks,

The infrequency of reports from Bragg perhaps gives you some idea of the lack of activity here. Currently the staff consists of one vet discharged from the 82nd last winter and an E-4 in the air force recently transferred here from Holloman AFB, N.M., where he was a member of a black socialist collective.

Activity here has been low key and sporadic but here's a synopsis: In late Jan., the 82nd began gearing up for Operation Garden Plot, the plan for the imposition of martial law. The army officially denied that the operation existed but unofficially described it as a precautionary alert. It included the most massive, large scale riot control training exercise in memory of anyone around (including lifers); unofficial cancelling of leaves; unofficial directives for GI's to get the personal gear in order; big influxes of new replacement equipment; many rumors that a deployment was imminent; a lot of paper work for clerical types as though a big inspection were coming up; maintenance schedules were speeded up; the general scene was so similar to the stuff that went down before the Mideast alert that rank and file GIs were pretty well freaked out. A little judicious snooping around and a bit of eavesdropping confirmed that something big was indeed going on. Also the Civil Affairs Units were beefed up and a lot of equipment was transferred to the national guard.

In view of the turmoil in the country then, impeachment, the building strike wave, the SLA, Zebra, the crisis of capitalism; we decided to take the threat as real and countering activity was imperative. Unfortunately our lack of organization and people resources made our response slow and spurt. We did manage to get some attention to the left press and the 3 or 4 most active GIs learned a lot.

Last winter we began work with the N. Carolina Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression. The purpose was two-fold, to teach GIs about the rest of the movement and to help the rest of the working class movement learn about GI organizing. We were relatively successful in educating GIs but the difficulty in getting the message across to other working class people was demoralizing to GIs and probably was significant in the later demoralization and inactivity of the GIs involved. We have heard some criticism of the Alliance as a CP front, but the value of working with them here has been that it in fact is representative of the class movement in Carolina and also is more than half black and Indian. The only other significant left tendency around here is the NCLC and the choice seemed clear. Clearly there are valid criticisms to be made of the Alliance but we feel our support has been the principled stand that any socialists and anti-racists should make.

Bragg Briefs was published in late June after a lapse of 10 months. Without help from the 3 Defense Committees, VVAW/WSO and the local Quaker House

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publication would not have been possible. We hope to get another issue out before long.

Besides building for the Raleigh demo the main organizing activities over the summer have been a haircut campaign and, currently, a defense campaign for some Latinos who were beaten up by MPs. The haircut thing was based on a guy who refused to get a haircut based on sexual discrimination. (A WAC had been transferred to his motor pool as a diesel mechanic). We got lots of signatures on petitions, but the guy got burned out after a while due to a lack of other people refusing, dope, and the threat of heavy jail time. After a couple of trial date postponements he was offered a UD and a plane ticket home the day before the trial. He accepted. As far as the usefulness of haircut campaigns, we feel that it is important to support and organize for mass popular demands, both to teach the usefulness of unity and to raise the demand that working class people have certain rights which we will only get if we fight for them. Principled people may label the haircut issue trivial and reformist, but for us, experiences in the military and jail have emphasized that it is an issue of popular democracy. Perhaps it is similar to a situation in which assembly line workers organize for the right to go to the bathroom.

The Latino campaign has been partly successful. We got affidavits from two of the guys (out of 11) and several non-involved people including some civilians and an E-6 and his wife. At least one of the guys has been charged with assault on an MP; two have been to CCF (correctional custody facility/art. 15). We managed to get Ron Dellums, Ted Kennedy, and the governor of N. Carolina to ask for investigations. The army's response has been to deny that the beatings occurred, to attack the morals of the E-6's wife (the old paternity suit gambit--"I can get 20 guys", they actually got 45) and unofficially, to say the poor defenseless MPs (who carried clubs and 45s and only outnumbered the Latinos 2 to one) were attacked in a race riot. WAC MPs were present during the incident at the MP station, though they did not beat anyone. The campaign is currently fizzling because of problems in dealing with the Latinos; the language barrier, threats from the army to stay away from the GI Union, and the charges filed against them.

Quakers in the area seem to have taken a turn of some sort. AFSC has ceased all support of GI groups in the south and the church has been putting more emphasis on "Quaker Houses." They are investigating the possibility of starting one at Le-Jeune. We had been holding weekly meetings of 6-7 people at the local place for almost two months, but last week the local board of overseers asked us to find another place to meet.

Repression has escalated recently. In May someone fired a half dozen shots into the office/apartment, damaging a car slightly. No threats or midnight phone calls though. In July someone painted black crosses on the car and mail box of the

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new staff man on two consecutive nights. Last week one of us was busted for maintaining a public nuisance. Not for the office, but for a dump which the landlord keeps in the back yard. The next door neighbor was also busted. Not so strange, perhaps except that the offense, essentially for littering, was investigated by a half dozen plainclothesmen, including two SBI (State Bureau of Investigation) from Raleigh.

The prospects for the future are unclear. One of us is working 60 hours a week and the other catches a lot of swing shifts and TDY like anyone else on flight duty. Thus the money situation is enough to keep an office of sorts going, but energy is depleted. Things are not happening because we are not being aggressive and we are not being aggressive because things are not happening. In the last year we have attracted twenty or more relatively solid people (solid in the sense of having good politics) for a couple of months, but the lack of visible organization, the lack of continuous activity, discharges, transfers, personal and marital problems and a bunch of intangible things, have prevented us from really getting off the ground. Both of us are committed to the premise that GI organizing is essential to the revolutionary movement. Neither of us, however, is immune to the above mentioned disappointments and both of us would rather be working with a larger group in a more politically active environment. BRAGG BRIEFS and the GI Union may soon die out at a ripe old age of six and a half years. Are there some footloose socialists out there committed to the GI struggle and hip to organizing blacks and other workers in the south?

In struggle,
t.d. & w.w.

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A Response to
Center for Servicemen's Rights
by the VVAW/WSO National Office Collective

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(This was sent to GIPA in July, in response to the report by Center for Servicemen's Rights report in the May/June issue of the DISCUSSION BULLETIN. It was accidentally left out of the DISCUSSION BULLETIN until now. Our apologies to the National Office Collective.)

Without going into a long polemic on party building and the Revolutionary Union, we would like to respond to some of the points raised in the May/June issue of the Bulletin. First, the gay question. We don't have a position on the gay question. We are trying to unite as many people as possible in the struggle against imperialism, and to take a position on every issue would narrow our base, not broaden it. In your relationship with RU, we feel you made a mistake. Meeting with RU, in our opinion, does not imply any sort of blanket support for all of their positions. When RU came to meet with you it is not likely that they came with the intent of recruiting people from the Center into the RU. From the description that you gave, they came to learn more about GI organizing in order to help them formulate their programme, something that we would expect any serious Marxist-Leninist party or pre-party to be doing. We don't know if they were aware of the gay person on your staff, but we doubt if that would have led them to call of discussions with you. If they want to meet with you, even though you both have political disagreements, we think that you should accept the invitation to meet. While the gay question may be a very primary question for someone who is oppressed by the anti-gay attitudes in this country, the gay question is not a primary question in the struggle against US imperialism. Other problems, not the least of which is organizing GIs, should take much higher precedence in trying to build unity in the movement in this country.

We also want to take issue with the last paragraph of your report about the RU visit. It is not necessary for even a majority of the people in this country to accept socialist ideas before a communist party is formed. A communist party will represent the most advanced elements of the working class and through its contact and work among the working class formulate programmes that synthesize the genuinely progressive aspirations of the working class. If the party is successful in its work, it will eventually win the support of the whole of the working class. But first a party must be built so that one exists to win mass support. For you to say that "much more needs to be done before we can build a party" is to put the cart before the horse. Imperialism is bringing crisis after crisis. People in this country know that things aren't working very well, especially the economy. The purpose of the party is to provide a scientific analysis of our problems and offer solutions that the working class will accept. That, of course, means taking up the day-to-day fight at the workplace. But it also means taking up the fight on a national level. And that, inevitably, will mean the formation of a working class party. Conditions can't get much worse in this country, and to wait for the people to 'advance' is to miss the role of the party in providing leadership. The party should always be one step ahead of the people and be providing leadership.

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As far as quantitative vs. qualitative change in the consciousness of the country, well, that's not exactly a fair comparison. To use the war in Vietnam as an example, there are certainly quantitatively more people against the war. But at the same time that quantitative change means a qualitative change in the entire political makeup of the country. It has been our experience that there has also been a qualitative change in people's outlook toward Vietnam. At one point the people were mainly opposed to the war because of all of 'our boys' who were getting killed. Even though none of our people are getting killed in Vietnam anymore, there is still an overwhelming sentiment against continuing to support the war. The reasons vary, but they have certainly gone beyond the racist self-interest that existed years ago.

You say that you don't feel that a mass base exists in the working class that is conducive to building a party. Maybe you have a different view of a Marxist Leninist party than we do, but in our view the party's role is not to get everyone at a workplace to become a party cadre; the role is to develop cadre within the workplace who can provide leadership. I guess we're not exactly clear on what you mean by a 'base in the working class.' It seems to us, though, that the more important thing to consider is the objective conditions--conditions that would lead people to look to communist party leadership for help in fighting back. Those conditions certainly exist today, and with such new swindles like the Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA), commonly known as the no-strike agreement, the militancy of the rank and file workers is certainly increasing. Even looking beyond the workplace and to the economy in general, things are getting pretty tight. In short, people are getting fed up. If anything, that is leading them to at least look at alternatives to the present system.

We believe it's time to start building a party and are very interested in participating in the struggle to form a real working class party. With an understanding of the leadership role that such a communist party would provide for the united front, we are also beginning to discuss what the relationship of VVAW/WSO would be to a communist party.

Unity, struggle, victory,
The National Office Collective

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DISCUSSION

A Response to the Norfolk Defense Committee by the VVAW/WSO National Office

Dear Friends (at the Defense Committee):

We read your project report in the August issue of GIPA NEWS AND DISCUSSION BULLETIN, and most of it we are in agreement with and are very encouraged by. There is one section, however, entitled "July 4th Raleigh Demo", which we feel compelled to publicly reply to. The two points we would like to discuss are (1) the statement that the demonstration sponsored by us in Washington, DC, on July 4th "had practically nothing to say to the particular oppression of Third World GIs and vets, and so had little Third World participation;" and (2) your decision to support the Raleigh demo rather than the DC demo.

First, our demands. It's not exactly clear, first of all, whether you are simply making an observation or if you are critical of the demands themselves. It appears, though, that you are critical of the demands. In any case, it is important that the reason for these specific demands is understood. The purpose of the demonstration was to focus on amnesty and veterans. While we do have ten objectives as an organizational basis of unity, we do not feel that it is a good tactic to raise ten demands at a demonstration. Although our ten objectives would have spoken directly to racism and GI issues, we do not feel that building around ten demands does anything to improve the political impact of a demonstration. If anything, it only serves to confuse people as to what the actual focus of the demo is. We were not trying to cover all forms of oppression, but rather to focus on specific.

Now. As to not speaking to the "particular oppression of Third World GIs and vets," it is true that a demand against racism would have directed the politics of the demonstration more to the 'particulars' of oppression faced by Third World GIs and vets. However, our goal was to focus on amnesty for war resisters and the particular oppression that they face as war resisters, which is bad discharges and inadequate benefits, since vets with bad discharges are by far the largest group for whom we demand amnesty. Those were the particulars of the amnesty question, with the "Indochina" demand bringing in the anti-imperialist nature of the resistance and the continuing war, and the "Nixon" demand bringing in imperialism at home, including his refusal to consider any type of amnesty.

But even putting aside the basis for our focus in this demonstration, we think the demands did speak to Third World GIs and vets. With regard to GIs, the demands were not the 'day-today' type demands like "End non-judicial punishment" or "remove Captain so-and-so." They do, however, have a great deal to say to military organizing in general. As we pointed out in our POSITION PAPER ON

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AMNESTY (see our pamphlet on amnesty), which was adopted a year and a half ago, "A broad-based amnesty campaign which stresses the correctness of individual responsibility for resisting criminal orders would help to break the new ideals of the military machine. It should be seen as a way of opening the minds of new recruits for the volunteer army to the possibility and necessity for refusing orders that they find objectionable on political and moral grounds." We also pointed out in our position that we felt amnesty "makes the connection between the GI movement and the civilian movement clear by recognizing the magnitude of the GI struggle. The attention and consciousness of the civilian movement to that struggle will help to point out possibilities for future united political work, and will be a clear step forward in the breakdown of class and race bias." There is much more in the booklet about the military and the connections we make between it and amnesty, as well as the connections we make between amnesty and Third World oppression. Suffice it to say that we think our demands did (and continue to) speak to GIs in their role as part of an imperialist military; by definition, that must also speak to Third World GIs.

There is also the question of bad discharges. Third World GIs are hit hardest with bad discharges, and we think that demand also speaks directly to them, particularly since the military will be using the discharge system to 'weed out' the growing number of Third World enlistees who are faced with joining out of economic necessity, but who later decide that they are no longer going to put up with the racism and other forms of oppression. It also speaks to Third World vets, since they have in the past, and will in the future, get the highest percentage of bad discharges. Not only that, but these bad discharges are much more likely to affect a Third World person in getting a job than a white person. In case you weren't aware of the magnitude of the problem, Third World vets got 24% of all bad discharges in the last ten years, even though they made up only 11% of the military.

And this all leads directly into the question of benefits. Not only do Third World vets have bad discharges to contend with, but they are much more likely to have to rely on the VA for health care or educational money than white people are. A bad discharge virtually assures them they won't get any benefits; and even if they had a good discharge, the benefits are woefully inadequate. Again, Third World vets have gotten the short end of the stick with regard to the VA, and as Third World vets their alternatives to the VA are obviously much less than white vets.

Within the context of the focus of the demonstration, we think the demands spoke very directly to Third World GIs and vets, not only as Third World people, but as GIs and vets in general.

We also disagree with your conclusion that since our demands supposedly didn't focus on specific Third World issues that this was the reason for the small Third World turnout. If anything, that is a simplistic analysis. We think the reason for the small Third World turnout had much more to do with the fact that our chapters didn't do much pre-demonstration organizing in Third World communities. That, of course, is a shortcoming of our organization. But to continue on this

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point briefly, we would like to point out that in one place where we did pre-demonstration "organizing," prisons, we got a tremendous response from Third World people. At the July 4th rally, we cited petitions of support for the five demands which were returned to us from 20 federal and state prisons with over 800 signatures. By even conservative estimates, at least half of those signatures were from Third World prisoners, considering that roughly 75% of the federal and state prison population is Third World and that the most politically conscious prisoners are Third World.

Finally, we are puzzled after all that you had to say about the Raleigh demonstration and against the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression that you still went there instead of to Washington. We certainly don't think that you would claim that everything was a surprise. But the NAACP aside, we think the demands themselves would have argued against going to Raleigh rather than Washington. If our demonstration had, as you say, little to say to Third World GIs and vets, the Raleigh demonstration had nothing to say to GIs or vets--of any nationality. "Abolish the Death Penalty" and "Stop the Behavior Modification Center" were two of the three demands (depending on how you count them) of the Raleigh demo. We can't see how these demands are even remotely connected with the GI Movement; they certainly have little to do with the vets movement. "Free All Political Prisoners" is a good issue to educate GIs around, but it also is not a burning issue of the GI movement. The theme of the demonstration, "Stop Racism and Repression," also does not in any way identify the military as an institution where this is a problem. Of course there is racism and repression in the military, but to try to connect this demonstration (which was directly mainly at North Carolina's racism and repression) with the problems of GIs is stretching the political purpose of this demonstration to the outer limits.

Our main problem in understanding your building for the Raleigh demo instead of the Washington demo, however, is not so much the Raleigh demo itself, but the fact that there were two national demonstrations on the same day and that you chose the Raleigh demonstration over Washington. (It should also be noted here that first of all it would be physically impossible and organizationally impractical for us to wait for a response from every national organization before we selected the dates for our demonstration. Secondly, the dates for the two demonstrations were announced in our respective national publications during the same two-week period in late April.) The reasons you gave do not seem to offer much support for your decision. The first reason you gave, to build civilian ties in your area, is a logical reason to go there. The other two reasons, however, seem to speak in favor of going to Washington. As an anti-imperialist organization, it would seem that you would choose to support a demonstration that was anti-imperialist rather than one that was categorized by you as "anti-racist." It would have also seemed more important to "help provide a more anti-imperialist GI presence" in Washington than in Raleigh. The demands raised in Washington can certainly be tied closer to the problems of GIs than the Raleigh demo did. It's true that racism affects GIs, but it also affects people in every other walk of life. The point is that there is nothing specifically "GI oriented" about racism; it's not an issue that is limited to GIs. It certainly is an issue that has to be raised in the

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GI movement, but to say that the Raleigh demo was speaking to GIs more than the Washington demo, simply because it was raising the issue of racism, seems like far-fetched political rationale to us. Our strategy is to raise issues such as racism in conjunction with demands that directly affect the group of people you are trying to organize, in your case GIs, and our case vets and GIs and those who support our program. From our understanding of your goals, they are much broader than just organizing against racism; they include organizing against the system that perpetuates racism--imperialism; which is why we expected you to be marching with us in Washington, rather than in Raleigh.

In conclusion, we want to say that we feel that this discussion goes beyond just the question of which demo you went to. The decision made by you was a conscious political decision which reflects a general political outlook of your organization, which is certainly not clear in your report. We would like to work with you in the future in building the GI movement, but it looks like there is a need for a lot of political struggle if we are to build closer unity. The decision by the Defense Committee to go to Raleigh rather than Washington was an indication to us that we are moving further apart than closer together. We think that the decision to ally yourselves with the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, an organization which you don't seem to have any praise for, was a political error; not only because of the nature of the NAARF which you aptly described in your report, but also because you ignored building for, or participating in, an anti-imperialist demonstration which represented your politics much more, and spoke to the people you are trying to organize much more, than the Raleigh demonstration. We hope this criticism is taken in a comradely manner and that it will bring out the much needed discussion about our organizations and the GI movement, as well as the NAARF.

We'd suggest that folks read our 12-page booklet containing our position on amnesty. We hope it makes our position more clear and that it will explain to you in much more detail why we think that amnesty does speak directly to GIs and vets, especially Third World GIs and vets.

In Solidarity,
The National Office

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NEWS RELEASES

Hair Fight Continues
Berlin/Heidelberg Sept. 23, 1974

In the second round of court-martial proceedings against EMs who refuse to comply with military hair regulations, PFC Louis M. Stokes of HHD, US Army Communications Command in Mannheim, W. Germany, was sentenced to 4 months of confinement at hard labor, a bust to E1 and loss of 2/3 month pay. The Special Court-Martial took place on Sept. 18--more than 5 months after Stokes' initial charge. He picked up the exact sentence given to Sgt. Dan Pruitt at Alcombury Air Force Base (England) in January of 1974.

The small courtroom of Judge Green was full with soldiers and supporters, despite his efforts to cut down the already limited spectators' section. Seats reserved for the prosecution's guests remained empty and Stokes' supporters--several of whom are long-haired soldiers heading for the defendant's table in the coming months--simply filed in and took them. Earlier, the guard at the gate of Sullivan Barracks had asked some civilian spectators if they were connected with the GI paper "Fight Back" which was to be barred from the base. They immediately replied "no," reached to remove their quite visible "Fight Back" buttons and strolled on through the gate.

After a 3-minute "deliberation," the jury of two 20-year veteran NCOs, two lieutenants, and one captain found Stokes guilty of two counts: disobeying a "lawful" order from an NCO and failure to obey an order or regulation from a commissioned officer. One of the original 6 jury members was eliminated by defense challenge, after admitting he had previous knowledge of the case. Through staff meetings, he had been told to expect "strange people on the installation" on the date of the trial and the possibility of demonstrations on base had been discussed. Stokes was represented by Bill Schapp of the LMDC in Heidelberg. The thrust of the defense was to reduce the maximum sentence at the Special Court Martial: 6 months confinement at hard labor, 2/3 loss of pay, reduction to E1. Pointing to Lou's blond, ear-covering locks, Schapp said it would be hard to argue that Stokes hadn't violated existing army hair regulations. What could be argued were Stokes' motivations. In the extenuation and mitigation of charges hearing, more than 10 witnesses, including Stokes, attested to his character, job performance, and the generally oppressive nature of hair regs.

Two character witnesses, associated with Salvation Army projects in Los Angeles and San Francisco, in which Stokes had participated, testified to his honesty, sincerity, and "tremendous sensitivity to fairness and individuals not getting fair shakes." Stokes' own immediate NCO called his job performance as a computer operator "fantastic," and stated his long hair "hadn't interfered one bit with his job." Immediately after making his decision in April, Stokes had approached him asking whether his actions would upset the unit's performance, the Sgt. added.

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An Army psychiatrist was the first of the expert witnesses called by the defense. It was his opinion that if new regulations allowing "harmless self-expression with hair and dress codes were implemented, general morale would improve immensely. Two NCOs, both instructors in the race relations program in Hanau, agreed that the military haircut policy was one of the most common complaints brought up during their sessions. One explained that since a number of women have moved into combat-ready positions, a very visible double-standard has developed. Current hair regulations for women only stipulate that hair not touch the collar during duty hours.

The other instructor, a Black Sgt., testified that the double standard also applies to Blacks. "Black soldiers can pack their hair for duty and pull it out at night," he said, adding that the regs find vastly different interpretations from base to base.

Two women GIs, a photographer and a motor-pool mechanic, offered testimony about their experience with long hair. One told of her recent 2-week field exercises where 30 women in a battalion of 860 carried and fired weapons and trained with gasmasks. "It wasn't a problem of getting a good fit with a mask with my hair down. With the hair up, it's different," she said. The mechanic related that she'd been an honor grad of her AIT class where 6 women received their MOS as wheeled-vehicle mechanics out of a class of 400.

A medic in the Dutch Army also took the stand with long brown hair falling a good foot from his beret. He testified that every soldier in the Dutch Army is combat trained and that every soldier has the freedom to choose his hair length. Sometimes, nets are required, but only when the work is very dangerous.

Stokes took the stand last for the defense. Quietly and deliberately, he explained how he had reached the point of open defiance. "A citizen does not cease to be a citizen once he becomes a soldier, but becomes a soldier, because he is a citizen." Turning to the life jury, he said, "I wish to serve the people. But I believe soldiers and Americans are tired of conforming to one man's ideal. I've taken my stand here. I'm not conforming anymore."

In his closing statement, Schapp pointed out that the Army had once been in the vanguard of American society in some areas, like with its early desegregation policies. Unfortunately, that wasn't the case today. He asked the jury to put the recent presidential pardons and amnesty proclamations into perspective when making a felon out of a person who refused to cut his hair.

After the prosecutor mounted virtually no arguments through witnesses, he latched onto one theme in his wrap-up. Deterrence. With indirect but obvious reference to the growing number of soldiers who say "no" to current military hair

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standards, he stated that deterrence was the real issue at hand. "What we are confronted with is an order. We do have to be better in the Army. Louis Stokes hasn't gotten better, he's gotten worse. Your decision may make others think twice, before they decide to disobey orders."

Stokes received the verdict optimistically--by no means surprised or disappointed with it. He had long prepared himself for the max. The deterrence argument may have been persuasive for the 3 officers and the 2 NCOs, but its logic of fright doesn't apply to the current number of GIs who have found the hair regulations intolerable and are ready to face court-martial for their commitments. The next trial in West Germany has already begun against Sp/4 George W. Stone of 5/68 Armored in Mannheim. Several others are on the way, including one GI who was offered an Expeditionary Honorable Discharge if he would cut his hair. He refused. And now it looks like 1Lt. Matthew Carroll--another hair resister--will face a General Court-Martial for his outspoken criticism of class injustice within the military. The max is 5 years. Resistance is literally exploding in the military with braids, mutton-chops and moustaches popping up all over. A recent report from Okinawa tells of 30 out of a 40 man Coast Guard Detachment who have refused to obey haircut orders and now face court-martial, in Tokyo. As of Sept. 22, 15 GIs in West Berlin have received their court-martial papers and the number could rise to 40 within 2 weeks. Perhaps when Lou Stokes gets out--his enlistment runs until 1976--and returns to his unit, this struggle will already have been won, and serving the American people won't involve becoming a felon for wearing long hair in Army greens.

David Medina fact sheet
San Diego, California

In August, several members of the crew of the USS Agerholm, a destroyer, got together to publish an issue of a ship's underground newspaper, the Scaggie Aggie Review. The Review talked about working conditions on the ship, railroads at Captaln's Masts (Article 15's) and so on.

The ship was scheduled to leave for a WesPac cruise on Sept. 17. The folks putting out the paper were concerned about safety hazards and faulty equipment on the ship. (The primary firefighting equipment didn't work; navigation equipment was faulty; engine foundations were rusty; there was inadequate ventilation below deck.) They decided to put together a press conference, before liberty expired on the 17th, to talk about the conditions on the ship. They hoped to create enough public concern to force the command to make needed repairs.

A week or more before the press conference was to take place, Seaman Recruit David Medina, one of the editors of the paper, was arrested on charges of

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"solicitation to mutiny" and "distribution of unauthorized material." He was taken to the 32nd Street Naval Station brig and placed in maximum security. His arrest prevented the press conference from taking place.

After Dave's arrest, a Dave Medina Defense Committee was formed at the Center for Servicemen's Rights, to publicize his case and give him support, and to talk about the issues of working conditions that the press conference would have raised. Local civilian groups and press people were contacted, and a demonstration was planned for Sept. 25. The press took a real interest in the case, and asked the Navy a lot of questions they weren't able or willing to answer. Information on TV and radio, and leaflets put out by the defense committee spread word about the case around 32nd Street, and the response from sailors was overwhelming. People talked about the case, passed around the leaflets, and made their support for Dave known.

The day before the demonstration, the brass announced that the "mutiny" charge was being dropped to "solicitation to go UA". The Navy argued that Dave had asked people to hold a press conference after liberty expired. The "unauthorized material" charge remained the same. The afternoon of the demonstration, Dave was released from the brig and put on restriction on the base.

That evening, 100 supporters picketed the main gate of 32nd Street, and listened to a brief rally about the case. Needless to say, there was much support from the base, and the brass was very upset.

The court martial was set for Oct. 1. Between the demonstration and the court martial, news coverage, leafletting by the Committee, and talk with people on base continued. Local civilian friends also called the command to give their opinion of the charges and demand an explanation.

The day after the demonstration, a writ was filed in Federal court, asking for a temporary injunction to halt the court martial and for permanent relief for Dave through his release from the Navy. This action was based on a hardship discharge Dave had applied for during the summer. His father and mother are both unable to work, and he is the only person left to support his four younger brothers and sisters. A job was waiting for him at home. The Navy turned down his request for discharge without giving any reason--grounds for a petition for writ of habeas corpus in federal court. The petition also argued that, since Dave should have been discharged last summer, there should not be a court martial on charges brought against him since then.

The federal court judge denied the temporary injunction to halt the court martial, but agreed to hear the matter on Oct. 28.

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On Oct. 1, the Navy announced that all charges against Dave were being dropped, and that Dave was to be discharged. They gave as reasons the fact that witnesses for the court martial would have to be brought back from the Agerholm (now on WesPac) and 'further review of the evidence.' By that evening, Dave's discharge had been processed. He was given a general discharge.

On October 2, Dave Medina and the two prosecution witnesses who were to testify against him, held a press conference at the Center. They talked about the case, and the reasons they feel the Navy was forced to drop it; as well as talking about the conditions crewmen face on the Agerholm.

David says that, although he is a civilian now, he isn't through with the Agerholm. He intends to continue to express the feelings of other folks on the ship about their situation, and to give whatever support he can to the rest of the crew in organizing against unsafe working conditions.

RESOURCES

TURNING THE REGS AROUND: The third edition of TTRA is expected back from the printers by mid-October. Copies will cost \$1.25 for one copy; \$1.00 for 2 to 10 copies; and \$.75 for 11 or more copies. They are available from TTRA, Post Office Box 8413, San Diego, Calif. 92102.

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THE GI CONFERENCE--PROPOSALS

VVAW/WSO Revised Agenda Proposal

The following is a new agenda that we are offering. Following the agenda is our explanation why we feel this agenda will work the best.

- | | | |
|---------------|----------------|--|
| FRIDAY | 7 PM | 1) selecting leadership group and discussion of its function. |
| | | 2) discussion of agenda and workshops. |
| | | 3) evaluation of past practice. |
| | | 4) general discussion by each group (answering questions about their reports; discussing their relation to the rest of the GI movement.) |
| SAT. | 9 MA | 1) workshop on military strategy. |
| | | 2) workshop on GI work in relation to labor and community struggles |
| | 12:00 | lunch |
| | 1 PM | workshops on military disciplinary system--UCMJ, brigs, etc. (can be broken down into smaller groups) |
| | 5:30 PM | supper |
| | 7 PM | 1) workshop on counseling. |
| | | 2) workshop on GI defense work. |
| SUN. | 9 AM | 1) workshop on working and living conditions (incorporated into this workshop can be a discussion of relating to military dependents.) |
| | | 2) workshop on organizing on ships. |
| | 12:30 | lunch |
| | 1:30 PM | 1) workshop on racism and Third World organizing |
| | | 2) workshop on women in the military |

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5 PM	supper; caucus; run off workshop reports, etc.
8 PM	1) workshop on VVAW/WSO proposal for Armed Forces Day actions and program (see proposal)
	2) workshop on special organizing problems.
MON. 8 AM	Plenary session

Explanation of agenda proposal

The first point that should be made is that the discussion and rationale for this agenda has come from our experience in conducting our own national meetings over the last four years. The thirteen national steering committee meetings that we have held have helped us develop our ability to conduct political meetings with a reasonable degree of success. We'll combine our explanation with a response to the counter proposal from the Center in San Diego and the suggestions from the Defense Committee in Norfolk.

The Friday night agenda, we feel, should be accomplished by the time we break up for the night. We think that the schedule will be tight enough as it is, and we will have to be disciplined in trying to keep to the schedule. We agree with CSR that the "general discussion" would probably last for a long time. Consequently, we have relegated it to the last position on the Friday night agenda. If it gets too late, we feel that the general discussion will be the easiest item to cut.

The workshop setup that we have for Saturday and Sunday, we feel, will offer the most effective use of our time. We disagree with CSR's proposal for not having more than one workshop at one time. First of all, we don't think it will be possible to cover all of the topics (which are at a bare minimum as it is) if we don't have simultaneous workshops. Secondly, we think that CSR's first reason, "folks won't miss workshops they want to attend--and we will be spared the problem of deciding whether we are women, or third world, or legal counselors," is placing the individual before the collective interests of this conference. If we had more time for this conference, we would agree to having one workshop at a time. But given the circumstances, we should base our structure of the conference on accomplishing the greatest amount of discussion in the four days of the conference. It is true that some projects will miss some of the workshops; but making that a criterion for single-workshop periods is not placing any faith in the rest of the people in attendance. At our steering committee meetings, for example, we often have as many as four workshops at a time, and many regions have to pick one workshop over another. We don't think that that situation has had any detrimental effect on our discussions in those workshops. It also does not mean that people

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who miss workshops won't be able to discuss the topics or hear what was discussed. The plenary session offers the time for the workshop reports to be presented and for questions and discussion to take place at that time.

We also disagree with CSR's proposal for plenary sessions to be interspersed throughout the workshop period. Again, from our own experience such regular plenary sessions would not add anything to the effectiveness of the conference. First, it would be a duplication of the final plenary session. Second, we feel it is safe to assume that people who missed a workshop will be talking to someone who was at that workshop and learn of any proposals or controversial discussions. Finally, we don't think there will be enough time to do this.

As is evident from our revised agenda, we disagree with CSR's agenda structure. Aside from the plenary sessions taking up extra time in between workshops, we think that there will be a lot of duplication if we use CSR's agenda. A discussion of military conditions and consciousness, which they have at 1:30 on Saturday, should take place in each of the workshops that we have proposed. We don't think any workshop should overlook the concrete conditions that we are faced with.

As far as organizing is concerned, we have the same basic objective in mind that CSR has, that is, to move from a discussion of the problem, the politics of the problem to how we are going to attack it. The difference, however, is that we feel that this could be accomplished much more efficiently by going through that process in individual workshops on each topic, rather than trying to gear the whole workshop schedule around that goal. We don't foresee any of our workshops as just a general discussion of the problem; that would just lead to endless intellectualizing about the problem. Instead, we feel that each workshop should be primarily concerned with "how are we going to organize around this problem."

We also think that it would be unrealistic to try to get through all of the topics they have suggested in the Organizing workshop in four hours. We think it would be a miracle if we could get through even half of the items in such a short time. As far as the breakdown by each service that is suggested in the Organizing workshop, we don't think that is necessary at this point given the relatively small number of projects in existence. In the future, hopefully, this will be necessary, but for this conference we feel that the particular problems of each service can be raised in each workshop. (We also don't think that anyone should approach the conference with the intention of getting our organizing down to a science for each service. We see that as certainly a good goal for the future, but at this conference we are more interested in seeing a programmatic unity develop that can lead us to that point in the future when we can achieve that higher unity.)

The Communication and Organization within the GI Movement workshop we don't feel is necessary at this time. We already have a vehicle to communicate and discuss issues, GIPA NEWS AND DISCUSSION BULLETIN, and projects should

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already be corresponding and sending their literature to other GI movement offices. If someone has a specific proposal, it could be discussed in the plenary session; but otherwise we don't think it warrants a two-hour workshop, given the other issues that must be discussed.

Now, to respond to suggestions made by the Tidewater Defense Committee in the last BULLETIN. We weren't ignoring Third World GI groups in our Racism workshop; we felt that it was included when we mentioned "how to fight back." Sorry if this wasn't clear.

We do feel that we made a serious omission by not including a workshop that discusses the use of GIs against workers and against community struggles. Consequently, we created a new workshop for Saturday morning in which we intend to deal with the points raised in the second and third paragraphs of the Defense Committee's suggestions, i. e., the domestic use of GIs.

The suggestion on educating GIs and dependents about the "dangers of fascism, martial law, or a coup" could be included in the workshop in military strategy. Education, we feel, would be a natural programmatic approach to what we will be discussing in the Military Strategy workshop.

The workshop in Women in the Military could certainly include the "ideology of male supremacy" and so forth. In our suggested agenda items we weren't trying to write a position on the subject, but merely to cite the general categories that needed discussion.

The final item we would like to respond to is the gay question. It is our feeling that this item should not be discussed at the conference. The reason for this position is that we feel that such a discussion would only lead to a seriously divisive attitude developing. As we see it, there are two totally opposite views on the question of gayness, and to expect these differences to be resolved in a three hour workshop without any prior documents being circulated is a poor decision. Keeping in mind that the intended goal of the conference is to achieve some programmatic unity, we don't feel that a discussion of the gay question will come anywhere near a political unity, much less a programmatic unity. We feel the more proper forum for discussion of this question is in GIPA NEWS. If people at the conference feel that this is such a burning issue, then, of course, we would have a workshop. But we think such a workshop would shed more heat than light on the subject.

A few more points on the agenda. The workshop on Military Disciplinary System which is scheduled for Saturday afternoon is the longest workshop of the conference and is the only one at that time. By giving this workshop more time we weren't saying that it was a more important issue than other topics; what we did feel, however, was that there are so many things to talk about under this heading that it would warrant much time to cover everything. It could be broken down

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into smaller groups each discussing everything under this heading, or the smaller groups could each take a subheading.

On Sunday night we have suggested a workshop on the proposal that we are submitting. We think that a discussion of this proposal will offer people a chance to discuss in a workshop a 'long range' programmatic approach to organizing. Such a workshop will also offer the body a chance to discuss programmatic ideas that came out of previous workshops in relation to a more cohesive 'long range' approach to organizing, and it will also perform one of the main functions of a workshop, which is to hash out ideas before they come to the floor for discussion. In addition to thinking that we have a good proposal for a minimum program, we also think that a workshop on the proposal will provide the forum for discussing a broader programmatic approach that will be discussed in the workshops on individual topics.

Attendance at the Conference

We accept CSR's proposal that attendance be unlimited. We do request, though, that people let us know how many people are coming. We hold to our original proposal that there be five votes per project.

Participants vs. Observers

This should be clarified, since it was poorly stated in our original mailing. The only people who cannot vote are Observers, of which only one per group is invited. Those who are considered Observers received special letters and know who they are; there were only about six such observers invited.

Leadership at the Conference

We accept CSR's proposal for leadership, with one modification. We think it would be much simpler to just divide the country in half at the Mississippi River and people west of the River choose two people for the leadership committee and the people east of the River choose two people. That will make it less of an arbitrary decision on our part, and will avoid bickering over the "boundary lines." We will have chosen the two people to represent our office, which will bring the number to six.

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VVAW/WSO Program Proposal for
GI Work

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We in VVAW/WSO see the need for reaching greater unity within the GI movement as one of the major prerequisites for its continued growth and development. We also feel that one of the best ways we can begin the process of achieving such unity---and thereby building the anti-imperialist GI movement--is by building upon our strengths, the common ground we already share, and struggling to achieve as much programmatic unity as we can in the process. While we will undoubtedly not be able to agree on all, or even most, aspects of our work and the strategy for the GI movement (although that is certainly the goal we should all be striving towards), the greater the unified effort we can achieve towards common goals, the greater our success will be. This is obviously not to deny the need, the absolute necessity, for struggle around our political differences. Clearly that is the best way of clarifying our various positions and of actually arriving at the best course of action. The point is, however, that in the process of this struggle our goal is always towards achieving greater unity as a result: unity, struggle, greater unity!

To this end, VVAW/WSO is proposing that the upcoming GI conference adopt a unified program proposal for GI work around a minimum goal--the 1975 Armed Forces Day. Historically Armed Forces Day, along with work on ending the war in Indochina, has been one of the high points of the GI movement: one of the very few times of the year when widespread efforts were made to mobilize GIs towards very basic or general goals. While we realize that this proposal is only for achieving a very minimum level of unity for very specific and limited goals, we nonetheless feel that it can be an important first step in the process of really uniting the GI movement and moving it forward.

There are 3 parts to this proposal, which we think should be discussed separately.

(1) The first part is the slogan we are putting forward as the general political guideline and goal of our work. That slogan is: **BUILD THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST GI MOVEMENT--UNITE TO FIGHT ALL OPPRESSION!**

(2) The second part consists of the general demands that we feel should be the focus of our day-to-day work with GIs in building for Armed Forces Day. Obviously we are willing to struggle around the specifics of each demand being put forward, but generally the demands selected were done so on the basis of finding the greatest political points of unity in the GI movement as a whole rather than on attempting to select the specific demands that might be more applicable at one specific military base. The demands fall into two basic categories: demands that are specifically oriented to the day-to-day needs and oppression of GIs, and demands that link the GI movement up with the overall anti-imperialist struggles. They are: 1. End all racial oppression! 2. End the oppression of women in the military! 3. End non-judicial punishment! 4. End the use of GIs as strikebreakers and riot cops! 5. A single-type discharge for all GIs and vets. 6. Universal and unconditional

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amnesty for all war resisters! 7. Implement the agreements, end all aid to Thieu and Lon Nol!

(3) The last part of the proposal is that, based on the general slogan and specific demands listed above, that local and regional actions/demonstrations should take place at or near US military installations all over the world on Armed Forces Day, May 16, 1975.

EXPLANATION OF PROPOSAL

Based on the experience of our own organization, particularly during the last 9 months, we feel that this type of approach lends itself well to mass organizing and towards building the people's movement. The essence of it lies in achieving as great a unity as is possible around a common program and then moving forward as a unified body to implement it. The program is characterized in goals and orientation with an overall political theme or slogan and is built around specific demands to base day-to-day work on--demands that speak to people's specific needs and the specific way they are oppressed under imperialism, and demands that link up their struggle with the overall anti-imperialist movement. Day-to-day work around the demands is done with the goal of building for a common massing of strength at a major high point of activity or, in this case, a coordinated series of actions/demonstrations. The massing of strength being built for then in turn serves to broaden and deepen the future mass work done on a day-to-day basis around the demands. Just as the day-to-day work cannot be seen in isolation from the coordinated mass actions, the mass actions and demonstrations cannot be viewed in isolation from the day-to-day work being done; they should only be seen as high points in an ongoing campaign around the demands.

In building for the national demonstration VVAW/WSO held in Washington this past July, our chapters focused on five demands, including amnesty, the war, bad discharges, veterans benefits and Nixon. We felt that this was very effective in local organizing and was a major reason for the successful 4 days of actions in Washington. The point, again, is that the success was directly attributable to the fact that the demonstrations were only seen as a high point in our ongoing campaign around the demands. Similarly, day-to-day mass work was not seen as being separate from the building work done for the DC demonstrations, but rather an integral part of that work.

We felt that starting off with one target date for a GI program was the best approach and that Armed Forces Day was the one day that everyone could agree on. As we sum up the experience of this period next summer, we may all decide on continuing with this approach and adding some other dates for local or national actions, or adding or changing the demands. As to what actually happens on Armed Forces Day, this will be up to each project, base, or ship. But whatever form these actions take, it will be a day which GIs can look forward to when they can engage in a united form of resistance knowing that other American GIs will be doing likewise all over

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the world. We think this is at the heart of what we mean when we talk about unity--not merely a sense of theoretical, political unity, but actual, concrete unity that comes out of our day-to-day practice. This proposal, we feel, is a starting point. It is a minimum program which we feel can lay the groundwork for refining and broadening our work in the future and building unity in the GI movement.

The demands which we have put forward (which we are willing to struggle around are chosen for a number of reasons. The first is that they can all be tied directly into the nature of US imperialism by getting at why there is racial oppression, why women are oppressed, why there is arbitrary, non-judicial punishment, why GIs are used to break domestic struggles, why the military feels it necessary to brand someone for life with a bad discharge, why the government refuses to grant amnesty to war resisters, and why the US continues to maintain its presence (including military) in Vietnam.

The first four demands, we feel, are self-explanatory and do not need elaboration for purposes of this proposal. The fifth demand, a single-type discharge, ties the GI movement into the vets movement. It offers the chance to illustrate the fact that the struggles of GIs are part of a much larger struggle and that once they are out of the military they will face other forms of oppression, i.e., being a veteran. If the demand is explained well, it can help GIs to understand that it's not just the military they are up against, but a whole system--a system that will follow them wherever they go. And finally, this demand can be used to explain why GIs are not given the option to quit their job. The discharge system is, in fact, designed to do just that--keep GIs from quitting their job by threatening to give them a lifelong mark.

The amnesty demand, while not directly affecting most GIs (except deserters), does raise one of the most important issues of all by pointing out that resistance to the military, resistance to wars like Vietnam is correct--that resistance to oppression is our responsibility. We think that the strong history of resistance in the military in the last ten years should not be lost to the signing of the Paris Agreement or the signing of Ford's bogus amnesty. Rather, we think it should be brought forward in our daily work and encouraged. The 500,000 GIs who resisted the military and received bad discharges and the tens of thousands of GIs who have deserted represent a tradition of resistance which should be built on, and cannot and should not be forgotten. As anti-imperialists, we should be encouraging resistance in the military and constantly demanding amnesty for those who do resist and suffer the consequences of resistance.

The final demand, which is on the continuing war, is a demand that not only should be continually raised by all Americans, but it points to the most hideous and well-known example of US imperialism and military intervention in recent history. While there are obviously many, many other such examples of imperialism and people's struggles against it, it is our opinion that a demand on ending the war in Indochina could obtain the widest possible unity within the GI movement given the

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great unity already existing around this demand. It is a demand that is increasingly of major importance for our work, given the concrete situation now in Indochina and one that offers a concrete example of what US imperialism really means.

We would also expect that local issues would be raised and added to these general demands during the day-to-day work and again on Armed Forces Day.

Finally, the slogan we are proposing for this program, **BUILD THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST GI MOVEMENT--UNITE TO FIGHT ALL OPPRESSION!**, we feel sums up the essence of what our primary tasks are in the GI movement. We feel that the GI movement can, and must, be built on overtly anti-imperialist lines, as indeed it has been in essence. Anything less than such a political perspective would be objectively holding the movement back and tailing behind the level of political consciousness existing among GIs. Our role as GI organizers is to play a leadership role, showing GIs the best political direction they can take, not passively following behind whatever spontaneous actions they may already be involved with. Secondly, the concept of uniting to fight all forms of oppression, both those facing GIs and those facing all people around the world, speaks to the concept of linking up the GI movement with the people's movement as a whole. It squarely points up the fact that the GI movement is part of the overall anti-imperialist movement and cannot be viewed in isolation from it.

submitted by the VVAW/WSO National Office to the National GI Conference

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PROJECT REPORTS FOR THE NATIONAL GI CONFERENCE

Long Beach MDM

We have been recently seeing a good pick-up in GI's coming by the Drydock, our paper is being well received on base also. This last issue has reflected better contact with local struggle, and conditions on base. We successfully fought charges against our GI cadre by the base brass. It was over his participation in a demonstration over conditions on base. Charged with disaffecting loyalty, we mobilized lawyers, and made it known the charges would be fought. The brass backed down and he never had to face his mast.

A demonstration of Navy wives also was held in support of VRB (Variable Re-enlistment Bonuses). 15 wives held this demonstration about 2 weeks after the MDM action, and their law suit is still in the courts. Their leadership is apolitical, but it's a good issue to hit the brass with and expose the way they treat GI's. About 76 GIs are part of the suit, and we have covered it in our paper.

We just held an anniversary party at the Drydock, and about 10 GIs dropped by, 8 of whom were ready for action. They have faced 12 hour work days, and 6 day weeks. Refusing to come in on Saturday, they had to face mast and got fined. We are planning a campaign around working conditions with these sailors, petitions, redress of grievance, demonstrations, and perhaps a 138 on their captain. The group is pretty well together and ready to fight back, and we are trying to get GIs from other ships in on it, as working conditions is a common complaint. In fact, a bit before these guys came by, GIs off the Long Beach came by with a list of their own. We feel our contact and work is improving, though discipline in our group could be better. We still face financial problems, so we are all kicking \$10 a month in to help out.

The Revolutionary Union carried out a series of meetings with us. They first approached us on the basis of wanting to learn about the GI movement, and include demands in their programme they are working on. (We just wrote out a first draft of MDM demands published in our paper, and have been receiving a good response to them by GIs.) After three general discussions, RU wanted to start to develop work with us. We asked if they could help distribute our paper on the base, as most of our people are working steady jobs, but they declared that they did not want to be just a labor pool for our group. Instead they wanted to develop our political work for us. We felt this was opportunism. After three meetings they were ready to tell us what to do, not wanting to do concrete practice, but sit at our meetings and direct our work. They had the attitude of "you need political direction, and we'll supply it," even if they only meet with us three times on the pretext of us educating them about the GI movement. They suggested we take Gary Lawton's case as a main project, a campaign the RU has taken up as a major area of work in S. Calif. While

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we have carried out propaganda work around Lawton, we did not feel it a major concern for GIs, and if we did a major campaign on racism, it would be around something more concrete like the Midway rebellion.

The second suggestion was to form "anti-imperialist GI caucus." This, we feel, would isolate us from the mass of GIs. While we do carry on consistent anti-imperialist work, we do not believe in raising the issue in an abstract manner, and tacking it onto our work artificially. In our past we have gone through a period of directing our main work at anti-imperialist propaganda, resulting in isolation from base GIs. GIs are mostly concerned with lousy base and ship working and living conditions, brutality, harassment, abuse of authority, racism and sexism. It is our job to explain these problems in a political manner, showing how the military is an imperialist institution through the experience of the GIs themselves. Carrying out general anti-imperialist education through articles in our paper on liberation struggles, etc., is also carried out. In fact, our first demand covers the issue of imperialism and national liberation. Nevertheless, to just attract those GIs with an anti-imperialist understanding to caucus activity surrounding only those activities would be to isolate ourselves from the mass of GIs. We have already seen this happen in our previous work. Furthermore, RU uses "anti-imperialism" as a catch all, and in a vague manner. If you don't agree with them, then you're a revisionist. They attempt to beat people over the head with "anti-imperialism." We are anti-imperialist, but we do not present it in the abstract, nor use it to do sectarian battles with other forces. In effect, the manner in which RU approached us was to make us a front group for their politics. They only wanted to guide us politically, coming up with abstract ideas in an authoritarian manner, and refused to do practical work.

Some thoughts about the conference:

We believe the upcoming conference should direct itself to establishing a loose organization, and not one which is centralized around a maximum program. A national GI paper, concerning itself with GI struggles as its content, would be good. Also adopting the GIPA Bulletin as an internal document, which in fact it already serves, and to see it as a responsibility of all projects to correspond and support it financially. The national paper and bulletin should be centered in different parts of the country, to avoid a small group coming to control the national voices. West and East coast conferences would be good follow-ups. We think the San Diego proposal for the national conference is more realistic and covers in more concrete aspects the important components of our struggle. Some of us believe we should see our efforts in the general trend towards a new Communist Party, a party which will certainly need military organizers and projects. But we do not wish to see any group trying to capture direction, and bring the GI movement under their wing. We are aware that the National VVAW/WSO office is close to RU, and hope that efforts to direct the conference will not be made by RU through the National Office. But that groups will come in the spirit of gathering together the GI movement, not to

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increase the hegemony of any one group, but in the interest of the struggle of GIs and in the interest of achieving a higher form of organization and understanding.

The GI movement is an inherent part of the United Front strategy for revolution. While strategically GIs must turn their guns around and side with the people, a strong tradition of struggle for democratic rights will give us a good start when we are in more intense periods. Imperialist invasions will continue throughout our history, until this system is overthrown. Because of this GI resistance to aggression and foreign wars must be organized. Strikebreaking and riot control will see more often use as the workers' struggle grows; here too resistance must be organized. We see a constant form of resistance in the spontaneous rebellion against conditions of racism, working and living conditions, harassment, and brutality. It is in these struggles, through the experience of GIs themselves, that struggle and education occur. These lay the groundwork for resistance to outright aggression against the people of the world, and the workers of our own country. Just as efforts of workers cannot go beyond militant unionism without conscious leadership by communist cadres, spontaneous rebellion is the highest form of resistance among GIs without the conscious effort of organizers to lead that resistance to the level of political rebellion.

In struggle,
Long Beach MDM

Ft. Meade Military Law Project/
Highway 13

The Military Law Project was formed in January of 1973. All its organizing has been in the post-Vietnam military, and our successes and failures can be traced to the conditions found in the "volunteer" military.

The MLP was formed by a coalition of vets in the Baltimore-DC area who had come together 6 months earlier to publish Highway 13 as a VVAW/WSO newspaper. The first MLP office was across the street from Ft. Meade, MD, in a small storefront on the sleazy strip of Odenton, MD. Because the Fort has few combat troops and is not usually involved in riot control in DC, it is not an especially strategic base. But it does have large numbers of MPs and combat engineers; a huge stockade (about 160 prisoners) and a PCF where AWOLs from the entire east coast return; and the security-conscious National Security Administration, where thousands of AF, Army, and Navy and Marine personnel work. Most GIs go into Baltimore or DC for recreation, and many actually live in those two cities. Although this makes work with GIs and WACs harder, there are also some important advantages--strong labor movements in Baltimore and DC and the many militant demonstrations in both cities have been useful in getting GIs involved.

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We have had contact with other bases, like Andrews AFB and Walter Reed Hospital, but this has been limited since we primarily focus on Ft. Meade.

From the beginning military counseling has been an important program. The two organizations which officially sponsored the MLP--and which paid most of the bills, except for Highway 13 costs--had counseling programs. We saw to it that MLP's counseling was aggressive, with a lot of attention paid to Art. 13G's and filing charges. We also held workshops to train GIs on their legal rights, and although few of them began counseling at the MLP itself, many did spread their knowledge throughout the barracks and stockade. Many GIs first became involved through our counseling program, and most of the active-duty folks now working with us originally came in for legal advice. We have a panel of psychiatrists who are helpful in discharge counseling, and a good working relationship with some JAG lawyers and civilian attorneys has been helpful at times. Presently, counseling at the MLP is on the decline. We attribute this to our lack of contact with new GIs, mainly due to the loss of our old office in Odenton and the government's successful attempts to keep Highway 13 from the GIs on base.

Highway 13 is the most important tool of the MLP. We print 3,000 copies each month, which are distributed largely through on-base vending racks which the Post Commander allowed us to use after we threatened a federal court suit. The vending racks have not been adequate however--some papers are ripped off, the cans for donations quickly disappeared, and there is no personal contact with GIs on base. Other means of distribution are impractical: there are no roads off-base where cars drive slowly enough to allow distribution, there are no off-base hangouts for GIs (most of 'em go to DC or Baltimore) and covert distribution on base has been tried at every opportunity, but has not been very effective.

Over a year ago, we decided to go ahead with our suit, demanding permission for civilians to hand the papers out on base (it's an open base, and previous court decisions protect the right to distribute). Although the Army has now agreed to allow civilians and GIs to hand papers out on base, there have been numerous delays, and we realize now we've neglected important work by putting too much faith in liberal lawyers. It was too easy to say "By next month we'll win permission to distribute on base--let's hold off until then...."

Highway 13 articles have clear anti-imperialist politics, and concentrate heavily on the relationship between vets and GIs struggles and the struggles of prisoners, students, and workers who are building organizations. We feel the layout and style of the articles is good, and in the last 6 months have benefitted from some internal criticism about rhetoric and phrase-mongering. Our weakest area is articles about specific on-base issues, and this reflects a problem in our contact with GIs--in the first 9 months, we have not involved GIs sufficiently in mass practice, and they often worked with the MLP for only a few months. When

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they were transferred or discharged their contact with us ended, and we often lost touch with the unit. About 10 months ago we started anti-imperialist study groups and weekly pickets, and our local base coverage is improving in the paper. Because we've effectively consolidated anti-imperialist leadership among GIs, we feel we now have a base to work from.

We have a mailing list of 350 which are mailed on a 3rd class permit, but most of the rest are given away free. The paper has been very regular in the past year (our 15th issue is on base now), and we feel this is very important.

Members of Highway 13 and the MLP support demonstrations by publicizing the event and providing transportation into DC or Baltimore. GI contingents have gone to dozens of rallies and demos in the 19 months of our existence, and the MLP has been instrumental in organizing many of these events. This linking of GI's issues to other struggles is crucial, and keeps many folks active in the MLP. And in this way we help to build a united front against imperialism, which we see as the only way we'll bring about the end of the imperialist system.

And our connection with other progressive groups benefits us directly, too--there are frequently as many civilians and vets as GIs at our actions and meetings and newspaper work nights, and we can always count on support from a half dozen organizations in Baltimore and DC.

Anti-Imperialist Study Action Group

Highway 13/MLP has been sponsoring an anti-imperialist study group for over a year. In the beginning the group met at the Highway 13/MLP office, and was conducted by a regular staff member. Now that GI leadership is possible, that group meets in the homes of the participants in a rotating system. We feel that individuals' homes provide a relaxed, more open atmosphere, one more conducive to study. At the outset, only active-duty people were invited to attend, but now others are openly invited, particularly the spouses of the participants. This is done to prevent domestic hassles, and to increase the number of participants. Criticism and self-criticism sessions are held at the end of each meeting and it is felt these build unity, by ironing out misunderstandings, summing up the lesson, and pointing out the best methods for dealing with various topics.

These are primarily study/action groups: a particular project of this group is a weekly picketline in support of the UFW at local grocery stores near the Fort. The picketlines are supported by the entire project--not just the study group. It has been a continuous action since August. Prior to this, the project had established a picketline in support of the Farah workers. In addition to providing outreach to the GIs who shop at these stores, the picketlines are good practice and a valuable part of the study group.

Pot-luck dinners and films have been very successful. We showed Potemkin,

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A Question of Torture (A Granada documentary about torture in Theiu's prisons), Si Se Puede, and a Farmworkers' slide show with a UFW speaker. Attendance has ranged from 18-23 (vets, GIs, dependents, and civilians). We'll do many more of these in the future.

Our funding is mostly from the American Friends Service Committee. Keeping good relations with them requires a lot of time and we are careful to keep Highway 13 independent (it's paid for primarily by donations from the 10-15 people who write and lay it out). We don't have any plans to replace their funding, and we recognize this is an error because it's inevitable that sooner or later the worsening US economy will put them out of business or our militance will drive off their support.

In closing, our successes have been due to the strong relationship we have with labor, student, and VVAW/WSO groups nearby--the GIs are eager to participate in civilian's struggles and they learn a great deal from the cooperation. And we benefit from their support of GI struggles.

The main thing holding back our progress is the division between Black and white GIs. We don't feel we can give this question adequate time in this paper and so we intend to present a special paper on this subject at the conference.

GIPA News & Discussion Bulletin

In 1972, the GI Project Alliance in Southern California began a monthly newsletter, called GIPA NEWS, with project reports and other news from the different projects in California. Gradually the newsletter expanded, first to include all projects in California, and then to include the Asia projects, as a "Pacific Rim" newsletter.

Shortly after that last expansion, GIPA learned that the United States Servicemen's Fund was planning to close its office. After some discussion among the Southern California projects, it was decided that USSF's discussion bulletin had been a really valuable tool for the GI movement, and that GIPA should continue the Bulletin by expanding the GIPA NEWS.

Since that decision, GIPA has put out 7 issues of the GIPA NEWS AND DISCUSSION BULLETIN (including this issue). It has retained some of the features of the old GIPA NEWS, like a separate section for "Pacific Area" reports, and a "Resources" section, but its main trend has been to take on the work done by the USSF DISCUSSION BULLETIN.

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Our Assessment of the Bulletin

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In general, GIPA feels that the BULLETIN serves a useful purpose, and is doing a fairly good job. Response from other projects has indicated that the BULLETIN is very useful for them. It seems to us that it has had a general, gradual increase in the number of project reports per issue, and that those reports give projects a very good idea of what other projects are doing, how they deal with problems, and so on. On the other hand, it seems to us that the Discussion Section, designed for analysis of our work and discussion of strategy and politics, has been weak. Only a few projects have used that section, and the number of analytical articles and reports has been small. When analytical things have been printed in the BULLETIN, on the other hand, other projects have done a good job of responding to them, either through the BULLETIN or through discussion with the project that wrote the article. That continuation of discussion, once it's begun, has been good; but we see a need for more discussions to begin.

One cause of this problem, we're sure, is a lack of time at projects to write analytical things, or to make an on-going analysis of our work. We don't know if the lack of analytical articles also means that some folks don't see a need for them or don't find them helpful; or if their absence means some other problem.

Another problem we see is that some projects haven't involved themselves with the BULLETIN at all. There are a number of projects that send us regular work reports, and some folks who send them periodically. Other projects, however, have never sent any material to the BULLETIN or answered our correspondence with them. Again, we feel that this may stem from a lack of time. But we wonder if there are other reasons as well--for instance, if some projects have criticisms of the BULLETIN or a sense that it isn't a useful thing.

Aside from this general assessment of the BULLETIN's content, there are several specific areas that we would like to talk about.

How Is Work and Decision-Making Done?

The decision to undertake the BULLETIN was made by all of the projects in Southern California, and all took some responsibility for the work and decision-making that goes into the BULLETIN.

Since the Center for Servicemen's Rights has a much larger staff and more resources (a typewriter, mimeo machine, space, etc.) than other projects in the area, CSR agreed to do the bulk of the production work--correspondence with projects to ask for reports and articles; typing up the BULLETIN; mimeographing and mailing it. Other projects agreed to help in gathering material for the BULLETIN and, through GIPA meetings, in making suggestions for and criticisms of the BULLETIN.

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Since most of the correspondence and work is done by several members of the CSR staff who are representatives to GIPA, there has been some confusion about the difference between GIPA and CSR, and we apologize to other projects for this confusion. There has also been a natural tendency for some of the decisions about the BULLETIN to be made by the folks who do the actual production work, when there isn't time for full GIPA discussion of a particular decision. So far, that tendency and the decisions have met with the approval of the rest of GIPA.

On the whole, however, decisions have been made by the whole organization. At our meetings, we make criticisms of the BULLETIN, decide on how it should look, what its editorial policy should be, how often it should come out, what its budgeting should be like, and so on.

We have also tried, in a couple of cases, to involve all projects that get the BULLETIN in decision making, by asking them in the BULLETIN what they thought about an issue (in one case, we asked who should receive the BULLETIN; in another case we asked what our editorial policy should be). This hasn't proved too successful, since usually only a few projects respond to those questions, and we aren't sure that they represent the feelings of the rest of the projects. We see a need for a better way to get all GI projects involved in making such decisions about the BULLETIN, in criticizing it, and in helping it to grow.

Finances

In 1973, GIPA received a grant of several thousand dollars for regional use. One of the uses we were allowed to make of that money was communication between projects. That meant that a part of the grant has been used to pay for the DISCUSSION BULLETIN. Now, however, the grant is running out; and the folks who gave us the grant won't renew it. Our other work makes it very difficult for us to spend much time on fund-raising. We have, at this point, enough money for about four more issues. After that, the DISCUSSION BULLETIN is going to be as broke as everyone else (probably more so), and we feel that we need to face this financial problem before the money is gone.

A couple of issues ago, we asked that projects send us donations for the BULLETIN if they were able (we suggested \$1 for each issue, which is a little less than the cost of printing and mailing). We are \$22 richer for that effort--two projects have responded to the request. But we still feel that financial help from the projects who receive the BULLETIN may be one way to keep it going.

We also hope that other projects will give some thought to ways of raising money for the BULLETIN, so that the burden will not fall only on the GIPA (which is not really able to handle it right now). If the BULLETIN is useful to all of us, GIPA feels, then all of us should feel some responsibility for it, financial as well as political.

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Who Should Receive the Bulletin?

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One of the questions we raised for all projects to help us answer was the question of who should receive the BULLETIN--whether it should be internal to the GI movement, or be open to people in other parts of the movement. There was not agreement on this question within GIPA, so we raised the question with other projects. Some folks felt that only GI projects, people who are doing organizing with the military, should receive the BULLETIN. Others felt that people who wanted to keep up with the practice and theory of the GI movement, but who are engaged in other kinds of work, should also receive it. We did not receive enough answers to make a decision that we feel represents all of the projects, or a majority of them.

So we have proceeded with a policy that we had made as a temporary policy. At this point, BULLETINS are sent to projects that are engaged in organizing within the military; individuals who are engaged in that work; and individuals who used to work in the GI movement and want to keep in touch with it.

We would like our policy to represent the feelings of the majority of projects. So we intend to raise this question during the GI Conference, and ask people to make a decision about it.

Summing Up

In summary, it seems to us that the BULLETIN has been useful to projects, that it's been able to continue at a pretty regular pace in its production and that (at least so far) it's been produced without any major political or practical problems. We see a need for more participation from projects in several areas--in contributing material for the BULLETIN, in criticizing it and making suggestions for its improvement, in making decisions about the BULLETIN, and in making sure it can afford to continue.

Center for Servicemen's Rights

The Military Situation

San Diego County is the home of about 150,000 active-duty people. That number is a little bit deceptive, since it includes people whose ships are home-ported here, but who spend a lot of time in other parts of the world on cruises. The Marine Corps has two bases here, Camp Pendleton in the northern part of the county, and Marine Corps Recruit Depot, one of the Corps' two boot camps, in San Diego City.

The Navy has been much more interested in San Diego. There is a Navy boot camp here, several small schools bases, a submarine base, the west coast's largest naval station, 3 naval air stations, a major supply depot, a naval hospital, and

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a number of other minor bases. These bases provide headquarters for the 11th Naval District, commander of the Pacific ocean cruiser and destroyer force and the commanders of naval air and amphibious forces in the Pacific. Over the last year or so, the Navy has begun shifting commands, people and ships to San Diego from other areas. Most noticeable has been the move (still not completed) of some 28 ships and 13,000 sailors and civilian workers from Long Beach to San Diego. The Navy clearly sees San Diego as a central area for commands and troops, and we feel that this concentration may continue.

Now, San Diego County has about a million and a half people in all, which means that the active-duty population and their families are very visible. The Navy, in particular, has an incredible impact on San Diego's population and economy, through the economic needs of servicepeople and "dependents," and through government contracts for ships and planes. A part of the local housing shortage is caused by the large and increasing number of military folks, and an inadequate amount of military housing. Jobs, schools, hospitals have all felt the impact of so many military people, and of course the military has only encouraged the separation and tension between active-duty people and civilians. The brass also has ties and influence with the local newspapers, police, city government, and business.

One of the ugliest parts of San Diego's adaptation to the military is the "strip" downtown. Folks who have been there say it compares with Olongapo in the Philippines. Although many elderly people and transients also live downtown, the area is designed to rip off servicemen. Every bus that comes from a base takes sailors and Marines to the heart of downtown. The area is crowded with porno shops, massage parlors, lousy restaurants, bars, and rip-off stores. In one two block stretch there are three (count 'em, three) Tyrrell's Jewelry Stores. There are 130 massage parlors in the city (that doesn't count the rest of the county) and a good many are downtown. So are the pimps and the rip-off baths. The strip extends for about a quarter-mile down Broadway, and down many of the intersecting streets.

Now, San Diego is a beautiful place, with parks and beaches and good restaurants and pretty countryside. But if you're in the military, you never see them--and no one will tell you how to find them. Being in San Diego, like many military places, is an incredibly lonely and alienating experience.

Who We Are and What We Look Like

In the middle of that mess downtown, a block and a half off Broadway, up the world's longest stairway, is the Center. If you want to be nice about it, you could say that the Center was once a hotel--there are about 12 medium sized rooms off a large central room, which serves us as a place to rap with people and do counseling. The Center also has a bookstore, which caters to both GIs and civilians (except for Turning the Regs Around and Advice for CO's, most sales are to GI

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cadre or civilians). There's a room for Up From the Bottom, a large room for programs, films and meetings. And for the time being, one room is on loan to the National Lawyers Guild chapter here.

Many people who walk up the stairs come for legal help. Our reputation for good counseling, and Up From the Bottom, are the two main ways in which people find out about us. More folks come for help than to check us out; but very often the folks who come by for help stop to find out what we're doing politically, and to learn how they can take part in that work.

The core of the Center is a collective of folks who have made a major commitment to working with the GI movement. The size of the collective changes often. Right now there are 9 of us here, but that does not count the 4 staff members who are presently on WesPac cruises, nor the 4 who are on "leaves of absence."

What is this collective? Well, we see ourselves as a political unit, a group of folks who have a lot of common political thought, who see our main area of work as the GI movement, and who feel a responsibility to carry out the decisions of the whole group. If you wanted to describe our politics in a little capsule, you could say that we are Marxist-Leninists. That doesn't mean that everyone has to be Marxist-Leninist in order to be part of the collective. We don't think that active duty people need to be Marxist-Leninists in order to join it; our criteria for joining are tighter politically for civilians. But the majority of us share those politics, and the folks who don't must feel that they can work with folks who consider themselves Marxist-Leninists.

Most of the folks in the collective work for a living, and most of us have been in the GI movement for quite a while. We've seen times when folks lived at a less-than-subsistence level to work full time at projects, and we've seen folks get burnt out on a schedule of all political work and no stopping for study or personal life. Out of our own needs to survive while we work at the Center, and secondarily out of those observations, we've developed a 'pace of work' that fits the needs of people in the collective. Because most of us work, the large size of our staff doesn't provide as many people hours as we might want. Some folks can spend only a couple of nights a week at the Center. Our pace of work--on the newspaper, on projects we undertake, on making decisions--is rather slow, although sure. The level of commitment is good, and things invariably get done. Somehow we've acquired a reputation around here for being solid--we think that's where it comes from. But that pace of work also lacks excitement and doesn't look real energetic all the time. Active-duty folks and dependents who are looking for a sense of excitement in the movement, quick activity, and a high level of energy, may well find them lacking. We see this situation as both a good point (in that we don't burn out, and in that we don't give people the false expectation that state power is just around the corner)

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and as a bad point (in that many folks need that sense of excitement in order to help them become involved and feel a part of the movement.)

Besides the collective, there are a number of active-duty folks and civilians who work around the Center (some a little, some a lot), but aren't a part of the collective. In some cases that's because they don't have enough time, in others because they aren't sure politically that they want to be a part of it). That group of folks varies a lot too: it can range from about 10 people to about 20.

What Are Our Goals?

Some time back, the Center set down for itself three main goals, around which we would work. Those are (1) raising proletarian class consciousness, (2) fucking with the military (otherwise known as impairing the ability of the military to carry out the imperialist policies of this country) and (3) helping people. We see that all of the work we do fulfills at least one, usually more, of these goals.

Raising Class Consciousness. The Center feels that raising class consciousness is the main, or primary, task the movement has to carry out today. That's true whether we are working with active-duty people and their families, or in the workplace, or elsewhere. Through propaganda, agitation, discussion, and class struggle in many forms, the movement needs to talk about the idea of a class, about the way working people are exploited and oppressed as a class, and about the way we can fight back as a class. Many folks we work with see that the military is messing with them. Many also see that other folks are getting messed over. But, aside from being sailors or marines for a while, they don't see themselves as a part of a group of people with its own set of problems and with a collective way of attacking those problems. We see that talking about the nature of class society, talking about the common problems working class people face, the need for unity, and the need for collective action is a critical part of the movement's work in this country. We think this work can be done in many of the projects the Center undertakes, from articles in Up From the Bottom to campaigns around working and living conditions on a ship, to talking about legal hassles with folks who come in for counseling.

Fucking with the Military. Now, the military has a special relation to imperialism, being what you might call the "armed wing of the state." That means people in the military are, in many ways, closer to the point of the contradiction of this country's attempt to monopolize the world. It means that the military carries out-at home and abroad--the policies that allow imperialism to continue and expand. It means that active-duty people and often their families see that domination up close. They see it in the wars they fight, in the maneuvers they carry out, in the faulty machinery and long hours they face everyday. We think that one of the tasks of the

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GI movement is to make it harder for the US to use the military to dominate other countries and to make it harder for the ruling class to use it against strikes and domestic riots. By making GIs more aware of the aims of the military, by encouraging the questions they already ask about what they are forced to do, and by building a strong GI movement, we impede the military's ability to carry out wars and other policies counter to the needs of the people in this country. Again, this work is done through UFTB, through campaigns around working conditions, through agitation against WesPac cruises, and so on.

Helping People. We feel that it's an important thing for the movement to provide help to people whose lives are harmed by this system. Partly it's a good thing because that kind of help from the movement makes clear the movement's integration with the people, its aims and its desire to create a better life for people. Folks don't just join the movement because it sounds good, but also because it offers a possibility for changing their lives and others' lives. A part of that is seeing that the movement doesn't ignore, but tries to deal with, day-to-day problems and needs as well as long-range ones. Providing services that people need is one way to do this, and a good way to meet people and to talk with them about the movement.

Now, some folks think that helping people, having a counseling or any other "service" program is reformist. But that is not inherent in helping people; rather, the reformism comes in when helping people with their immediate problems becomes an end in itself. It comes in if we make people think that nice folks can solve their problems with a lawyer or advice, and that the problems will just go away. So long as it is always clear in our work that short-term problems are part of long-term ones, then our counseling and other "service" work are not reformist. If we put our faith--and the serviceperson's--in the law, and talk only about the details of a counseling case, it's damn easy to fall into reformist mistakes. That doesn't mean, though, that the reformism is inherent in the "service."

With Whom Do We Work?

The Center sees it as important to work with all of those folks in the military and around it who are oppressed by the military. That includes Third World people, and dependents and women who join the military. It includes some people who are second and third termers. It includes gay people in the military. But our experience has been that most of the folks with whom we work are white men, usually single and straight, from working class backgrounds. Because we are so far from Camp Pendleton, they are also likely to be in the Navy. We see working with that group of people as very important, but not the only work we do.

That group of people, in many ways, determines our mass line. That is, we think the things that we say and do publically should be understandable to those people. For instance, when we talk about racism and the struggles of Third World people, we must make sure to make it understandable to the white working class men who are the largest part of our constituency. We must also do it in a way that

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doesn't make them feel like shit for being racist. It doesn't mean that we should avoid or "dampen" struggles around racism, sexism, or anything else, but it means we must conduct those struggles in English. It means we have to clearly identify who our enemy is and who are friends are, and have to make the points we raise clear to people who aren't directly involved in that struggle.

What Are the Issues Around which We Work?

From our three goals come some general direction for the kinds of tasks we undertake, and the way we do them. Here are several general areas in which the Center has worked over the last year. In all of these areas, we feel that it's critical to keep a class perspective and to talk about the issues in a way that raises class issues.

1. Working and living conditions. After the peace agreements were signed, we had a lot of discussion at the Center about what our work should be like. We decided that we should orient our work, particularly with the Navy, around working and living conditions. Our decisions and practice since then have shown this to be our main area of work. It includes everything from health and safety violations on ships to substandard food to long working hours to hazardous work. These problems, particularly in the Navy, have come to us again and again over the last year. They are problems that many people in the Navy, and a lesser number of Marines, feel strongly.

It's an area that allows us to raise important political issues. Many folks know things are bad on ships and bases because the Navy is still involved in Indochina. Unlike other services, it has never come back from WesPac for recuperation and rebuilding. Rather, WesPac cruises and recon flights continue, with yard periods few and far between. Damage done to ships by long years of war have not been repaired. The damage is worsened instead by continued overuse. Equipment falls apart. Fires start. It's easy to talk about and struggle around the relations between those problems and the Navy's continued commitment to Indochina, as well as its growing commitment to the Middle East and to several African countries. It's easy to talk about imperialism.

Work around working and living conditions also gives us a chance to talk with people about the relation between work in the military and work as civilians. We can talk about common problems and solutions, and fight the idea that these problems are unique to the military.

Cooptation and reformism connected with this kind of work are problems which need to be studied by us, and by the whole GI movement. We also need to think about the fact that not all parts of the Navy are equally affected by these problems. Folks in administrative or computer work, for instance, don't feel the problems as strongly, and working and living conditions aren't as good a vehicle for organizing with them.

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The Center has done a lot of work around these conditions. Part is done in propaganda work. For instance, an article by a sailor in UFTB led to a quick de-roaching of the USS Jason's mess. On the USS Agerholm, we helped with a ship's underground newspaper that talked about working conditions and about democratic rights. The editors of the Scaggie Aggie Review also planned a press conference for the day the ship was leaving on a WesPac cruise, to protest bad conditions, safety hazards, and faulty equipment on the ship. When one of them was busted for calling the press conference--and charged with solicitation to mutiny--we formed a defense committee to support him. The line we put down through the committee didn't just talk about his freedom to have a press conference; it also talked about the need to fight against bad working conditions, and about why they are so bad.

2. Civil liberties and democratic rights. This includes work against illegal and unfair use of the UCMJ and military regs, against repressive measures by the military, against harassment of lower-ranking people. And it includes work for the rights of political expression and organizing. Much of our counseling fits into this area, since in many cases our counseling helps folks to fight for rights that have been denied them. This work is some of our main work with Marines, since the Corps is one of the most repressive institutions around; but the Navy isn't exactly free from such problems.

We feel that such campaigns are particularly important in the military. Since the military runs on abuses of authority and on fear, fights for civil liberties help to weaken the military. They help to make it more difficult for the military to carry out imperialism.

One campaign of this sort was carried out on the Chicago, where one of the editors of the Pig Boat Blues refused an illegal locker inspection. He was written up for refusing an order, and took the matter to federal court. He lost there, after some delays; but not before the command on his ship was thoroughly harassed. On the Chicago (and to a lesser extent on other ships) that work resulted in a lot of quiet support for this guy, but not much active support. After the ship sailed, other sailors put pressure on the Pig Boat Blues editors to discontinue the paper so that they would not all be harassed. Cadre on the ship figure this was due to a lack of work with people on their part. While lots of attention was paid to the publicity and legal aspects of this case, we didn't make clear enough the meaning of the struggle and its implications for other people.

Another campaign took place at Camp Pendleton, where we worked with a group of black and white Marines who were outraged about abuses of authority, their lack of rights, and the racism of their command. People were railroaded at Article 15 hearings; people qualified for schools or advancement were denied without reason; one man with a medical light-duty chit was forced to pull weeds with broken fingers after they tore up his light-duty medical chit; blacks in the unit

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were routinely called "black easter bunnies;" the command systematically abused its authority and denied the basic rights of men in the unit.

We helped these folks with a congressional investigation of their unit, with advice on writing up officers under Article 138, with other legal advice, and with numerous copies of Turning the Regs Around, so that misuse of regulations could be challenged. This campaign, unfortunately, came to a premature end when the command separated the leaders of the group by transferring them, and banned our staff person from the base. (Several months later, the battalion commander was transferred. We have no evidence that our work was related to that, but it's certainly a possibility.)

3. Work in support of Third World struggles and around racism. As a white group, we don't feel that it would be right for us to try to organize Third World GIs around Third World issues. Our experience has shown us that most Third World GIs think that it would be wrong too. However, we do think it's important for us to give support to Third World GIs in those struggles. Sometimes this has taken organizational form. We've provided support for the Black Serviceman's Caucus, and worked together with them around the riots on the Kitty Hawk and the demonstration by black sailors on the Constellation. More recently, we worked with them on the Chicago, where they worked with a group of black sailors while we worked with white sailors.

Sometimes, we work with informal groups of black or other Third World sailors or Marines, providing legal help, publicity, and back-up. During this last year, for instance, we provided support for a group of black sailors at the Naval Hospital. With our help, they put together a press conference protesting discrimination against black students in corps school. While we made suggestions in that situation, we felt it would have been wrong to try to give their action much direction. They were unwilling to look to us for that direction, too, and the problems they faced in carrying out the action reflected the need for a black GI group (the Black Servicemen's Caucus wasn't going at the time).

At the same time, we feel that it's important for us to deal with racism with white GI's and their families. It's important to show not just that racism exists, but where it comes from and who it serves. So our discussions and work around racism usually makes connections between the problems that Third World people and white people face. We try to show why it's in the interest of white sailors and Marines to reject racist attitudes, and try not to present a moralistic line that simply says racism isn't nice.

4. Work with women. Although the Center has never been very consistent in its work with women, we feel that it's an important area of work, and one which we shouldn't abandon. Especially as the military increases the number of women in each branch of the services, we can't ignore this part of the military. In

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In last year, much of our work with women in the military has been with women who are gay, who came to us first for legal advice about witchhunts or bad discharges, and who got involved in political struggles around other issues that affect them. Despite the incredible fear the military creates among gay people, we found these folks to be very strong fighters. With these women, our work has been mostly around legal hassles and abuse of authority, and working and living conditions; and secondarily around the sexism and anti-gay biases they face. Our work with women has shown us that if we intend to work with women in the military, we must be willing to take on the "question" of gayness and develop a position on working with gay military people. If we don't do that, we'll be unable to deal with many of the military women we meet, and with some of the heaviest problems they face in the military.

Work with dependents, we feel, is also very important. Most of our contact with dependents is through legal counseling, though we have worked with several groups of women who protested working conditions on ships, their husbands' hours and schedules, and the Navy's disregard for families. We feel that this is an important area of work; and also feel that specific problems of dependents themselves, such as the Champus (insurance) cuts and bad hospital care, should be taken on by GI projects.

5. Work against imperialism. In our section on goals, we explained what we see as the military's relation to imperialism, and why it's necessary to raise the issue of imperialism in working with military people. Much of that work is done through propaganda in Up From the Bottom. For instance, one sailor wrote an excellent series of articles about Navy strategy and imperialism, which talked about what aircraft carriers are used for, why working and living conditions are related to imperialism, and why the Navy keeps trying to run all over the world.

The issue of imperialism is also raised, as we said, in talking about working and living conditions, particularly onboard ships. For instance, in working with people on the Kitty Hawk before its last WesPac cruise, we talked about the problems of the ship in the context of its role in Indochina.

What Do We Encourage Folks to Do?

Work around all of these issues comes and goes. Like every other project, we have peaks of activity and slow periods where not much is happening. During these slow periods, we're faced with a problem that we're sure many other projects face--what to encourage folks to do if they're interested in the movement.

We encourage people to do day-to-day fighting back on their ships and bases, and to teach other people in their commands how to do so. Article 138's, 139's, and other charges against office, and Article 15 appeals give people a concrete way to fight back against their command, and a way to show other people that they have some power.

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UFTB has been a main area we've tried to involve folks in, and a number of active-duty people work on the paper (that number varies greatly from issue to issue). We've found, though, that the folks who stay with the paper are usually the folks that started out with other aspects of work, and through that (through, say a campaign against harassment on their ship) saw the value of the newspaper. Folks who just stop by for a newspaper meeting often don't stay with the paper. That may be a criticism of the way we handle UFTB, or may be in the nature of work in this area. We see UFTB both as an organizing tool and as a propaganda tool. It's not just a way to print good ideas, but also a place where active duty folks and "dependents" can develop skills as organizers, can learn to put forward their ideas, and can write and talk about methods of dealing with the military.

We also encourage the development of ship's papers, and this has been real exciting. On the USS Duluth there have been, in the last year and a half, two underground papers, both well loved. On the Chicago, prior to its sailing, several issues of the Pig Boat Blues received much support on the ship, and helped to involve new folks in work on the Chicago. On the Aggerholm, the Review provided a vehicle for folks who wanted to deal with a tyrannical command and with incredibly bad conditions. We've found that ship's papers serve as a good example to folks on other ships who wonder what they can do.

We have wanted to involve people in ongoing study, but this has been a weakness of ours. Until now, no organized study group has existed, despite our recognition of the need for one. That's been partly because of objective problems (like WesPac cruises that decimate potential study groups), partly because of our own lack of discipline, and partly because of unevenness in our work. We're now trying to get a study group going.

But these are only partial solutions. We think it's really important that there be another organizational form to involve folks in. The Military Rights Committee was an attempt at such an active-duty organization, working closely with the Center, that would allow folks to become part of activity, take on campaigns of their own, and work jointly with the collective in directing the work of the Center.

The Committee didn't work, for several reasons. One was that the distinctions between the Center and the Committee were never worked out. Active duty folks on the committee were sometimes also a part of the Center collective, and had their work and political identity divided between the two. Programs and projects, then, were often carried out in the name of the Center rather than the Committee. Another reason for our failure was the slowness of the Committee to get started on actual projects. It spent many meetings putting together a list of demands, and thinking about things to do, without actually doing them. Some folks lost interest after a while and didn't come back. It was hard to tell new folks

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about the Committee when we couldn't show them what it was doing. Finally, the problems of duty, cruises and transfers made it hard to have meetings and get everyone together at once. We learned much from those problems (unfortunately, we learned the hard way), and hope that we'll be able to do a better job the next time around. For we think that kind of organization is a really necessary part of GI movement work.

What Is Our Relation to other Parts of the Movement?

We feel that the GI movement is part of the whole people's movement, and that it needs to build ties with that movement. This is particularly true of the civilian working people's movement. In order to do that, we've tried to develop ties with other movements in this area, and to do joint work with them. That's taken a number of forms. Work with the Wildcat, a local workplace newspaper, and with the UFW, has helped us to talk about the problems working people face as civilians, and to make comparisons with the military. Picketing with the Farmworkers, and putting on a farmworkers program, have taught sailors and Marines about the need for solidarity as well as the problems faced by farmworkers. Friendship with a local Center for Radical Education has meant that GIs who go to their programs find friendship and encouragement among civilian activists. Work with the local Indochina Peace Campaign, with ad-hoc civilian groups planning demonstrations, and with civilian underground newspapers, has been beneficial for our work and theirs.

We also see a need for more political and organizational unity between different sections of the movement. Towards that end, we became part of a short-lived Communications Network, where for several months different groups could share experiences and work on joint projects. Although that organizational form didn't last very long, and had serious political weaknesses, we feel that the attempt was important, and we've tried to continue to talk and work and struggle with other parts of the movement here. From that experience we know that our staff and the active-duty folks here have grown.

Summary

Over the past couple of years, we have been in touch with people on a number of ships and bases, and have been able to contribute to several struggles around the issues talked about in this report. Even with the ups and downs that the whole movement experiences (as well as with our own particular problems) we have pretty consistently been able to stay in touch with what's happening in the Pacific Fleet.

We have developed a mass line that is effective in raising political issues in a way that people can relate to and understand. We think that our work in this area is a significant contribution to the movement as a whole.

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Perhaps our single biggest weakness is in the area of political education and cadre development. The report notes our lack of success with study groups and GI organizations. We don't yet understand well enough how to apply what we've learned about mass line to the question of cadre development.

Another problem that is implicit in the report is our work with the Marine Corps. It hasn't been very consistent. For a number of reasons--the Corps being very hard to deal with, for one, and our distance from the nearest major base (40 miles) for another--our contact with Marines has been characterized by people coming to us for help around a particular issue or struggle and us being unable to follow up as well as we'd like to.

On the whole, our work has been solid, but certainly not spectacular. There are still a number of problems and questions that we all face--and the right answers can move us all ahead dramatically. It's our hope that this conference will help us all as we try to solve them.

Ft. Bragg GI Union Discussion

The question of who should get the bulletin. Anyone who asked for it would probably have a legitimate reason for seeing it, assuming there was no security hassle. Perhaps some potentially interested people are not aware of it and should be informed. People like ex-GI organizers. We all face the problem of being isolated from the movement in general, largely because most of the left is not interested in GI work anymore. The Bulletin might be a good thing for them to get. Not unsolicited, of course, but after some exploratory discussions.

To illustrate the problem of isolation we should look at the example of Chile. We would probably agree that the failure of Allene's coalition was that quality of its political line, their trust in non-violent, legal parliamentary struggle. The coup marked, in the words of MIR, the death of a tragic illusion. One of the failings of that line was ignoring the need to organize rank and file soldiers, sailors, and airmen, the need to neutralize the armed forces of the bourgeoisie. The record shows that there was substantial support for the workers' government among the rank and file military. Half of the army's troops were confined to barracks during the coup because the fascists deemed them unreliable. Many heroic individuals and several entire units took up arms against the junta. A majority of the NCO academy and even some members of the officer corps joined the workers. The parties of the left, however, with the exception of MIR, appear to have ignored the task of organizing the armed forces; and MIR's effort was too little and too late. MIR launched a support campaign for victims of the military's political clean-up campaign which took place the week before the coup. Navy officials rounded up sailors who engaged in such activities as informal discussions around newspaper articles and tortured and hung them. MIR went into the port city of Valparaiso on

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Saturday before the coup on Tuesday and handed out leaflets (and were arrested for their trouble).

MIR learned the lesson, apparently, because since the coup they have aimed a substantial portion of their propaganda at the rank and file military. Either their efforts or the spontaneous development of the struggle have borne fruit. Last spring an entire squadron of Hawker jets was disabled when saboteurs threw dirt into the engines. The entire squadron was arrested, officers and enlisted but the perpetrators were not found. The victory was consolidated when British workers at Rolls Royce refused to build replacement engines. In August several members of a destroyer crew were hung for mutiny when they protested long working hours. More than a hundred servicemen have been charged with various offenses, including capital offenses, for acts during and since the coup. (One duty of us in the US GI movement is to organize a defense campaign in support of the resisters. This writer has written and talked to several papers and Chilean support groups with as yet no response).

In an article in Radical America, Matt Rinaldi mentioned that revolutionaries in the past have mainly dealt with the military during the period of armed struggle and he cites the experience of the Cubans, Vietnamese and Bolsheviks. Those organizing drives, however, were not last minute, spur of the moment affairs when communists walked into the military camps the day before a battle saying, "Hey, guys, join us instead of them." They were the result of months and years of tedious, demoralizing, nitty gritty organizing; of sending cadre into the military, of leafletting bases, and dealing with families and vets' groups. The left tendencies must not agree because they are not doing much about it. Some have said that they agree that GI organizing is important, but not just now. Perhaps Bragg and the 82nd give an unrepresentative vista, but it seems from here that later will be too late. We may not be on the precipice of the struggle to seize state power, but we are never far away from mobilizations of the military. In the last 11 months at Bragg we have seen the Mid East alert, Operation Garden Plot, and a National Guard mobilization around the July 4th demo in Raleigh. We are obliged to struggle with our comrades of the left over this issue. If we do not get them to become committed to active duty organizing we should try to get them at least to see the issue and do something small, like publicizing our struggles and analyses. Probably no one in the US lives more than 50 or a hundred miles from a National Guard armory. Why are more revolutionaries not dealing with guardsmen

Regarding implementation of the above proposals; possibly one reason GI struggles do not get more attention is that we are not conscientious enough to get out press releases to the largest circulation left papers. Finances may keep many out of us from contacting all of the smaller papers, those directed to a community or other select constituency. For some reason, however, some papers do not print news that we do send them. Perhaps in some cases they actually "do not have room," but it appears that other times it is a situation of policy. We on the other hand should not make the sectarian mistake of refusing to approach them because we disagree with their line in general. Everyone needs to be made aware of the

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GI struggle.

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One thing we might do at the conference would be to draft a "statement to the left," asking that they cover our struggles in their press. Possibly we could get together a press release reporting on the conference.

The Dutch Conference

As things stand now, it appears that only two or three stateside projects will be sending a representative to Utrecht. Finances are the major obstacle. It might be useful at the Chicago conference to examine the possibility of pooling resources to send more people; work out something for instance where we all chip in \$100 per project and send a couple of representatives for all of us. (Selection ought to be an interesting process.)

We have written the Dutch folks asking whether they would be amenable to us sending literature and graphic displays (posters, photos, literature, paste ups of clippings, etc.) We have set up such displays at various meetings with pretty good success. Perhaps the folks in Germany could help coordinate this; maybe they could do translating.

Commercial air fare from New York is about \$500. Passports are required but not visas. To get a passport you must go to a passport office, located in the nearest district court building, with a birth certificate and two passport photos. The fee is about \$12, photos cost around \$6, and birth certificate copies are \$2 or less. Active duty, reserves, and national guard can fly for free on military hops. To get the necessary paperwork you must apply for regular leave to specified countries 30 days in advance. Regular scheduled cargo flights go to Frankfurt, Germany and Torrejon, Spain from Dover, Del., and Charleston, S.C. Your unit commander is supposed to verify that you have adequate finances for a return fare, but what he requires will more or less depend on how much of a prick he is. Flight is on a space-available basis so expect to wait more than 24 hours and possibly 3 or 4 days at both ends, so schedule leave accordingly. You must sign up for a flight in person at the base passenger terminal in squared away dress winter uniforms with a fresh haircut. During the waiting periods you can stay in transient barracks for about a buck a night. Baggage is searched at both ends by MPs so do not take anything like bulk literature or unauthorized military equipment (e.g., sleeping bags or blankets). The military says you don't need a passport to cross borders as long as you carry your ID card and the leave orders but it's a good idea to take one anyway. It takes about 3 weeks to get a passport from the local court building office; you can get one in three hours by going to the passport office on the first floor of the state department building in Washington, D.C.

When putting in leave requests it would be best to specify that you are going to Germany, Spain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. This way you can get either the Spain or Germany flights and also cover your ass, if stopped by anyone for any reason while travelling from the departure point to the conference. Land transportation is available from both Frankfurt and Torrejon to Holland

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(by train) at fairly reasonable rates, a travel agent could tell you exactly how much. Special services at Frankfurt has busses that go to Amsterdam but they aren't on a daily basis and probably wouldn't fit the schedule. Dependents are also eligible for these flights but they have to go through the same paperwork. Hitch hiking in Europe is at least as risky as in the states; you never know whether the local cops will bust you for it. Getting a hop is easier than this explanation makes it sound as long as you follow the rules.

Mailing Permits

We started looking into mailing permits when we realized that the last issue of BRAGG BRIEFS was going to cost \$160.

Changes in second class privileges regulations have made it almost impossible for movement papers to qualify. You must pay a non-refundable \$100 fee to apply. The majority of circulation must be paid subscriptions or newsstand sales. You must state a regular publication date and maintain it to keep the permit. You must maintain financial records which will be inspected once a year by a postal inspector.

For non-profit privileges you must show the post office official papers of incorporation as a non-profit organization. This means getting a state charter, maintaining a board of directors and keeping minutes of meetings. This stuff is also subject to inspection. There are ways to get around some of this but we decided that it was not worth the hassle.

Third class bulk permit costs 15 dollars and doesn't require any of the above paperwork. For all these permits there is some form filling and sorting required at each mailing, but it's not that much trouble and the post office can explain it to you. Third class bulk is what we decided to get. For any of these permits you can get address corrections from bad addresses by printing "address correction requested" on the face of the paper or envelope. If you want the thing returned print "return requested" on the front, but you will have to pay 10¢ plus whatever the original postage was. Address corrections only cost 10¢ each.

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